

Medical school faces sex bias case

by Charlotte Barry

A Surrey woman, aged 36, is bringing a case of indirect sex discrimination against Middlesex Hospital Medical School which refuses to consider applications from prospective students over the age of 30.

Mrs Daphne McGarry, of Surbiton, who is a school laboratory technician, is being backed by the Equal Opportunities Commission which agreed this week to pay her costs and provide a solicitor.

They will be arguing that far fewer women than men can comply with such an age requirement because they are more likely to have spent the years under 30 at home rearing children.

If she wins her case the result could have severe repercussions for the 12 London medical schools, most of which operate an age bar between 25 and 30.

The EOC's legal department will now be notifying Education Secretary Mr Mark Carlisle of the planned action, and has two months in which to remedy the situation before the case is lodged in the county court.

In court, Mrs McGarry's solicitor will be using as a legal precedent the 1977 case of Ms Belinda Price v the Civil Service Commission.

This, the first case of indirect

discrimination to be brought to court in Britain, involved the age bar of 28 which applied to new recruits to the executive officer grade of the Civil Service.

Mrs Price, who was also backed by the EOC, won her case following an appeal, and the age bar was removed.

Mrs McGarry, who would like to become a GP, was forced to limit her applications to the London medical schools because she is a single parent with two school age children. She has been studying part-time for the relevant A levels for the past four years.

She discovered on application that the Royal Free, St Bartholomew's, Charing Cross and the Middlesex medical schools all operate an age bar of 30. Guy's and St George's operate age bars of 25 and 27 and University College medical school will rarely consider an applicant over the age of 30, although up to 15 per cent of their intake consists of mature students up to the age of 25.

The Middlesex medical school was most specific in its refusal. It told Mrs McGarry that she could not be considered because she would be aged at least 42 on qualifying as a doctor. If she retired at 60, she would only be able to give at the most 17 years' service.

Holland to buy share of observatory

by Robin McKie

Science Correspondent

Britain is now set to sell a 20 per cent share of its Northern Hemisphere Observatory to Holland. The new deal means a saving of almost £3m for the Science Research Council, which is now committed to constructing a £9m optical telescope and a £5.7m millimetre radiation detector at the observatory on the Canary Islands.

In exchange for paying part of the building costs, the Dutch would be able to participate for about 20 per cent of the telescope's observing time. Negotiations on the deal are now being completed and when finalised will represent a crucial saving for the SRC.

The money saved will be used to speed up development of two space research projects - X-ray astronomy and an earth resources observation programme. Although these will still be carried out in collaboration with other European countries as an integral part of the work of the European Space Agency.

In the case of the earth resources project, the SRC will be working in conjunction with the Natural Environment Research Council in setting up a satellite-based system to monitor changes in the environment, such as those in the atmosphere, vegetation, and geological areas, including crop movements.

Although assembly and basic research project, the results will have a crucial impact on industrial development. For instance, knowledge about developments in our climate will play a critical part in future construction of power stations. It will also enable significantly more power will be needed throughout Britain and if atmospheric pollution was found to be increasing, the case for using fossil fuel fired stations, such as those using coal or oil, would be weakened.

The SRC and NERC intended to spend several million pounds on the programme but budget cuts have prevented this. Now they are seeking partners such as the Department of Industry, Energy and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture to fund the project.

Backing for Finniston proposals

Britain's 480 engineering professors yesterday gave strong support to the Finniston report's recommendations for reforming engineering education and pledged that they would do their utmost to implement the suggested changes.

However, the Engineering Professors' Conference warned that the government must provide extra funds for the reorganisation which would include the introduction of two new degrees - an MEng and a BEng - and an emphasis on teaching high level engineering practice. Although the conference backs the idea of the engineering authority, which would supervise the whole profession, money for education reforms is more pressing. Its contribution to the Department of Industry states:

"The professors added that they supported an engineering authority which would accredit university courses, promote training of engineers, and register qualified engineers."

There were some points of disagreement, however. The professors said they were opposed to the field selection of students for MEng or BEng courses at the end of first year as proposed.

Leicester to guarantee posts

An unprecedented move to solve the shortage of physics teachers by guaranteeing teaching posts is under way in Leicestershire.

The authority has just negotiated a scheme with Leicester University's school of education whereby it will guarantee at least eight teaching posts to postgraduate students of education students who complete their course successfully. There are currently about 10 vacant physics teachers posts in the county. The scheme will be the first of its kind with a university to operate from next year. It has already aroused the keen interest of the Department of Education and Science and reflects the concern that increasing shortages of specialist teachers, particularly in physics, has created nationally.

Poly principals narrow college rift

by John O'Leary

The first signs of an end to the growing rift between polytechnics and the colleges of higher education emerged this week with reports that at least two polytechnic directors were considering joining the college principals' group, the Standing Conference.

At the same time, the Standing Conference repeated its demand for one body to represent the main-tained sector of higher education and an MP called for closer links between the two sets of institutions.

Relations between the college principals and the Committee of Polytechnic Directors have been strained for some time, but divisions have become more open since the election of Mr Neil Merritt, director of Ealing College, as chairman of the Standing Conference. They are certain to be spelled out in detail when the principals give evidence

to the Select Committee on Education next week.

After a preliminary meeting with representatives of the Select Committee, the Standing Conference issued a statement criticising the CDP for its "divisive position" and asking for formal encouragement for the establishment of one national group to speak for the public sector.

Mr Harry Greenway, Conservative MP for Ealing North, who attended the meeting as a member of the Select Committee, said later he sympathized with the colleges' desire for equal treatment. "The present position is not helpful to either body and I certainly feel there should be closer links", he said. "Parity of esteem between the colleges and the polytechnics is very important and we have got to see that this comes about in reality."

The recruitment of polytechnic directors to the Standing Conference would be seen as an important step towards reconciliation, although membership has been open deliberately since the formation of the Conference three years ago, no polytechnic director has ever joined.

Dr Patrick Nutgens, director of Leeds Polytechnic, confirmed last week that he had been approached by a colleague with a proposal to seek membership and had said he would have no objection in principle. "Because we overlap so much in the Business Education Council and the Technical Council courses, which are supplemented by broad-based local public television courses, it will rely heavily on Open University materials."

The venture is one sign of a renewed upsurge of American interest in the ideas of the Open University. Another is the anticipated announcement by publishing multi-millionaire Walter Annenberg, former United States Ambassador in London, that he will give the Corporation for Public Broadcasting up to \$10m a year over the next 15 years to set up a national university of the air. Rumours of the Annenberg deal have been circulating for many months - its formal announcement, which may come next week, has been held up until

the tax authorities approve the details.

These developments came at a time when the future of the Open University's American office is in serious doubt. The British Open University Foundation costs more than \$100,000 a year to run, of which about half has recently been contributed by American Foundations (Carnegie, Sloan, Exxon and half by the Open University itself. But only one third of next year's running expenses have so far been promised by American sources, and the Open University may decide that it can no longer afford to be permanently represented in America.

The British Open University Foundation operates from an office in New York, staffed by an executive director on temporary secondment from Britain, with two American assistants. The foundation has been quite successful in promoting the image of the Open University in the United States and Canada and advising American institutions

about the problems and potential of distance learning but has been less successful in marketing its materials.

As the current executive director, Mr Peter Prince, observes, the Americans are going to need the advice of the British Open University Foundation more than ever over the next few years if the National University Consortium and the Annenberg venture are to succeed. The 1980s could provide an opportunity for the Open University to make money in the United States.

The National University Consortium will begin a pilot scheme in September, with the help of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation. In the first year only three courses will be offered each semester. More than 30 colleges and universities are expected to take part, but only seven were chosen to start the project.

Students will have to enrol and pay tuition fees of around \$45 per credit at one of the seven institutions, which will provide them with

study packages and telephone tutors. The television component will be transmitted by satellite from the consortium headquarters in Maryland and broadcast by local public television stations.

The number of courses and participants should expand rapidly after the pilot year, says Richard Smith of the Maryland Centre for Public Broadcasting who helped to put together the consortium.

The University of Maryland has already adapted several OU courses for local consumption. Under present arrangements the consortium and other American purchasers of Open University films pay the OU a royalty based on the numbers of students enrolled in the courses, but both sides expect to negotiate a new system of payment soon.

Mr Smith flies to Britain next week to discuss production techniques with the Open University. One topic of conversation will be a proposal that the OU and the consortium coproduce an American Studies course.

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OU set to conquer US airwaves

from Clive Cookson

WASHINGTON
The United States' first nationwide distance learning network, based on Britain's Open University, will take to the air this autumn. A new National University Consortium has been set up to run the system, which will use written study packages supplemented by broad-based local public television courses. It will rely heavily on Open University materials.

The venture is one sign of a renewed upsurge of American interest in the ideas of the Open University. Another is the anticipated announcement by publishing multi-millionaire Walter Annenberg, former United States Ambassador in London, that he will give the Corporation for Public Broadcasting up to \$10m a year over the next 15 years to set up a national university of the air. Rumours of the Annenberg deal have been circulating for many months - its formal announcement, which may come next week, has been held up until

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Students fight rejection of ex-convict

Academics and students have voiced their demand for University College, Swansea, to reverse its decision to refuse to admit as a student a man who was jailed for years for his part in a bank campaign in Wales in the 1960s.

A letter released this week confirmed earlier reports that the decision was taken only after the college authorities discovered the criminal record of Mr John Jenkins.

Mr Jenkins served seven years of a 10 year prison sentence, being an Open University student while in jail. He is now a community worker based in Haverfordwest.

A letter sent by Mr Jenkins to the college, head of the department of social policy and work, to Mr Jenkins, said the department was very sympathetic to his candidature but without prejudice to his political commitment, the matter had to be referred to the academic board in view of his past sentence.

Mr Jenkins said that the college had been told that he was a "perfectly constitutional" man.

Professor J. Gwyn Griffiths, emeritus professor of classics at the college, said he was "very sympathetic" to Mr Jenkins' candidature but that the college had given no reasons for refusing the application.

He said that the college had been told that he was a "perfectly constitutional" man.

He said he also understood that the college had felt Mr Jenkins' past sentence was a risk and harm to the institution's public image.

Support for Mr Jenkins has been given by Mr Jenkins' former tutor, Professor John Griffiths, and by the Department of Social Policy and Work, and by the Department of Social Policy and Work, and by the Department of Social Policy and Work.

Mr Jenkins is now a community worker based in Haverfordwest.

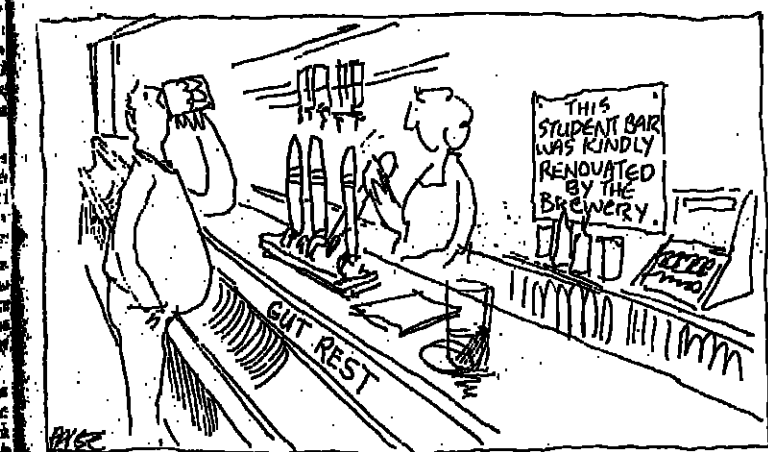
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Tapping the liquid assets

by Paul Flather

Students are playing for high stakes in the drinks business. A prospectus has been enormous, said Mr Spencer. "We expect to land deals on wines and spirits by the end of the year. Beer will be more difficult because there are many deals already in operation and breweries are so much tougher to negotiate with."

But the power of the student purse has not been lost on the breweries. Last year £17m was spent on drink by 180 student unions, which added together would stretch a mile. More than 500 staff are employed by the bars in serving liquor.

One problem facing the bars working party is the complex local agreements made with breweries.

Mr Ken Spencer, chairman of the student unions' bars working party, said a national deal on soft drinks was almost complete. The price of a tonic water or ginger ale will fall by up to 30 per cent in

student bars. Warwick University says they will save £4,000 a year on the deal.

"The interest generated by our prospectus has been enormous," said Mr Spencer. "We expect to land deals on wines and spirits by the end of the year. Beer will be more difficult because there are many deals already in operation and breweries are so much tougher to negotiate with."

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VAT officers withdraw from research battle

by Robin McKie
Science Correspondent

Bigly vice-chancellors are confident they have won their battle against Value Added Tax being charged on research grants. They expect to receive Customs and Excise confirmation of this in the next few days.

Officials at Customs officers had been introduced VAT on research grants in 1979-80 but delayed implementation until 1981 following protests from universities and research

They argued that a 15 per cent reduction in their research funds would cripple the country's already beleaguered science budget. Even the money had been paid

and then reclaimed, considerable detailed administrative work would have been forced on an already strained university staff system.

Large sums of public money would have been wasted if kept in the "chasing its own tail" through higher education and government accounting systems, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals warned.

Even then, there would have been a direct loss of funds of about £3m from research charities which would not have been even able to reclaim VAT.

"We are appalled by the amount of unproductive extra work which will arise both in research councils, universities and polytechnics," said Geoffrey Allen, chairman of the Science Research Council stated.

Malaysia cuts numbers in face of fee increases

by John O'Leary

The first indications of a serious decline in the number of overseas students coming to Britain emerged this week with the news that the largest national group, from Malaysia, is to be cut back next year.

More than 16,000 Malays came to Britain to study in 1977-78, the last year for which full figures are available. But the Malaysian High Commission confirmed this week that the introduction of full-cost fees would force numbers down in September as students are sent to the United States or other Commonwealth countries.

A spokesman said that the extent of the decline in numbers would not be known until later in the year and there was no question of a complete withdrawal. But he warned: "In the past the majority of our students have come to Britain but now it is unlikely to be the majority."

He said the surplus would probably be sent to the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand in the main. Since many of those traditionally coming to Britain were privately or commercially sponsored, the percentage reduction would not be known until close to the beginning of the new academic year.

Several institutions have noted a decline in applications from Malaysia. At Brighton Technical College, long-standing arrangements to take more than 50 students

sponsored by the Electricity Board of Malaysia are under threat.

At Aston University there has been a 20 per cent decline in applications from Malaysia, which is the source of a quarter of the university's 1,100 overseas students.

Although postgraduate applications are standing up well, numbers of privately sponsored undergraduates have declined significantly.

The same trend has been reported to the United Kingdom Council for Overseas Students Affairs from Norwich City College, where the decline is still more marked, and Teesside Polytechnic.

Mr Alan Parker, deputy secretary of UKCOSA, said they had received reports of a major review of policy by the Malaysian government and several institutions had noted declining numbers among privately sponsored students.

In the aftermath of the Iranian Embassy siege, Mr Merlyn Rees, former Home Secretary, asked in the Commons why it was so easy for Iranian students to come to Britain when Asians and West Indians who wished to come to study were forbidden to do so.

Mr William Whitelaw, Home Secretary, told Mr Rees that under the unended immigration rules which he had introduced recently the regulations against what might be described as "bogus students" were greatly tightened.

"But," he commented, "Mr Rees makes a proper point, and I will undertake to look into that, too."

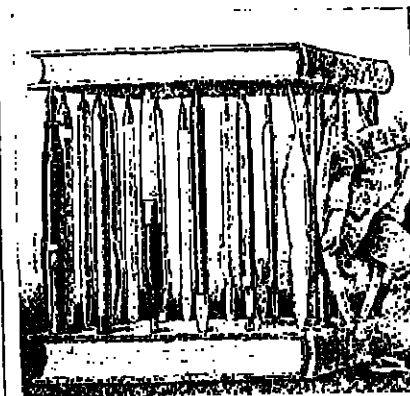
Polytechnics are being unfairly preferred to Colleges and Institutes of higher education in the approval of courses, the college principals told the Select Committee on Education this week.

Mr Neil Merritt, chairman of the principals' group, the Standing Conference, claimed that regional staff inspectors were under instruction to favour polytechnics in the distribution of courses. He cited a decision to place courses in Sheffield rather than Hull on grounds of polytechnic status and said: "This is positive madness."

The colleges had faced continuous

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Course plans to boost maths teacher supply

by John O'Leary

Two institutions in London have combined to launch a new course designed to combat the nationwide shortage of mathematics teachers.

In the latest of a series of "access courses" the City and East London College is to provide an opening for students without A levels in mathematics to go on to a BEd course in the subject at the Polytechnic of North London. The college's one-year course will be recognised as sufficient qualification to enter the new, tougher national entry requirements for the BEd.

Preference will be given to mature students and the normal minimum age for entry will be 20. Candidates will be expected to have O level or its equivalent in mathematics as well as personal aptitude for teaching. The course at CELC will begin in September with students spending half their time on mathematics and related studies. Those completing the year successfully will join the polytechnic's BEd course in 1981.

Mr Stan Silver, head of mathematics at PNL, said experience had shown that suitable students could be recruited without A levels. "The preparatory year would bring them up to the necessary standard."

The chairman of the Inner London Education Authority's further and higher education sub-committee, Mr Ellis Hillman, said: "In Inner London, as in the rest of the country, we are concerned about the shortage of teachers in one of the key subject areas. I hope the initiative taken by these two colleges will go some way to alleviating the problem."

Applications for the course should be received by CELC by the end of the month and an open meeting will be held on June 3. Courses for students without A levels are already run with success in conjunction with both PNL and Essex University.

Survey reveals dearth of applicants

More than one in four vacancies for junior maths and physics teachers caused by the previous holder leaving the profession, a research project has discovered, writes Bert Lodge.

It shows the average number of applicants for a scale one physics job is far less than two; for maths about five. Yet the average quality of applicant is no unsatisfactory that well over one-third of posts remain unfilled because heads do not feel able to appoint any of even the small field of candidates.

As the start of a monitoring exercise on the shortage of teachers in physics and maths, Mr Bryan Chapman, lecturer at the centre for studies in science education at Leeds University, counted almost 700 vacancies in physics and maths advertised in *The Times Educational Supplement* from February 22 to March 14 inclusive. Questionnaires were sent to the heads responsible for the advertisements asking the reason for the vacancy, the quality of the response and what the head would do if unable to make a satisfactory appointment.

About 20 per cent of scale one and two vacancies resulted from the holder being promoted. This was more frequent for physics and chemistry than for maths.

Another reason was an increased demand for the subject. "This was more evident in the physical sciences than in mathematics. About 20 per cent of all scale one and two posts are attributable to increased demand."

Mr Chapman comments: "The impression that is emerging from this monitoring exercise is certainly one of crisis. Given that since 1970 the number of posts being advertised has escalated (over 25 columns of science advertisements in the TES of April 18 alone) it must be clear that the teaching of physical sciences will have to be acceptably restricted in very many schools next year."

Poly staff attack 'joint year' scheme for engineering courses

by Robin McKie, Science Correspondent

The Finniston report recommendation that there should only be one common year for the proposed two new engineering degrees of BEng and MEng has been attacked by the Association of Polytechnic Teachers. In its response to Finniston which the APT has submitted to the Department of Industry, the association warns that the selection for MEng courses at the end of students' first years would have serious consequences.

"There will be a psychological barrier to students entering the profession in which three quarters of them are to be given their first sense of failure at the end of their first year," states the association. Instead it should be possible to provide a more attractive programme than one with an in-built sense of defeat within a year.

In general, the APT has welcomed the Finniston report, although it believes a main problem in the provision of engineers for the future has been tackled by Finniston's committee of inquiry into the engineering profession—the shortage of science teachers at British schools.

This shortage may have had a lot to do with the present shortage of British engineers and "unless it is removed the 257 pages of the report are so much paper".

"The local education authorities, supported by teachers unions, have resisted any central mechanism for increasing the supply of teachers in any shortage disciplines and have fumbled efforts which have been made by national government," the association states.

And in the area of continuing education, the polytechnic teachers propose that an Open Polytechnic be set up in parallel to the Open University to work in the engineering technology area. This would allow non-engineering graduates and non-graduates to be converted so they could operate in specialist areas of engineering expertise.

In its response to the Finniston report, the Technician Education Council states that, while it welcomed the recognition given by the committee to importance of polytechnics it regrets that most other public sector colleges have been ignored. Many of these do a significant amount of Higher National Diploma work in engineering as well as TEC programmes.

"Recommendations for the re-vamping of engineering education cannot be contemplated without considering their impact on the structure of these institutions and their interrelationship", the council states.

More support for Finniston's report has also come from the Council of Science and Technology Institutes, although several criticisms are highlighted in its response to the Department of Industry. In particular, the CSTI states that it is disappointed that the report fails to recommend sufficient impetus to effectively integrate science, technology and engineering into one dimension that is vital to regenerating the manufacturing industry.

"It fails to recognise that many in industry who practise as and call themselves engineers were trained in other disciplines such as physics, chemistry and mathematics", the CSTI's submission adds.

However, the council supports the establishment of an engineering authority, provided this is subject to the Policy Council, rather than direct to Government or Parliament. It also calls for a more direct control, and functions in close cooperation with existing institutions.

Scots form overseas association

A steering committee has been set up to form a Scottish students' overseas association intended to co-ordinate action among local overseas or international groups in the Scottish tertiary sector.

The committee, with representatives from all areas and the national union of students, was established at a preliminary meeting at Aberdeen University.

A spokesman for Aberdeen's overseas students association said the association was intended to be a permanent organization to help after overseas students' rights and welfare in Scotland.

"The initial concern will be to organize ourselves to voice our opinions that the government policy on so-called cut cost fees is inhumane, badly thought out and unjustly applied", he said.

In England and Wales, he said, there was the joint action committee of overseas students with the national coordinating committee of overseas students. But Scotland would have one all embracing association for universities and colleges with no ideological constraints which would be intended for all overseas students.

Iranian student power 'hits' case against full cost fees

by Ngain Croquet

The holding of the American hostages in Iran and demonstrations in Britain added to the difficulties of making the case for overseas students' fees.

"Everything conspires to strengthen public emotions against overseas students," said the director of the London School of Economics and Political Science, said this week.

He said it was an uphill fight against this, which was not confined to England, but that this was no reason to change attitudes towards overseas students.

Professor Dahrendorf was speaking in advance of a press conference on the school's position in the light of the overseas full-cost fees policy and financial cutbacks in general.

This week the school formally launched its 1980-81 Fund, the aim of which is to enable students of merit to come to the LSE who for financial reasons might be unable to do so. The aim is to attract



Ralf Dahrendorf: no over-reaction.

£2m to help about 1,000 students over the next five years.

Two former members of staff who have won Nobel prizes in economics, Professor James Meade (professor of commerce with special reference to industry and trade 1947-57) and Professor Friedrich von Hayek (Tosco professor of economic science and statistics 1931-50), have each donated £10,000 to the 1980-81 Fund. Dr David Rockefeller, a former student, has contributed

the largest single donation of \$50,000. About £650,000 has been promised so far.

For the first time, the LSE has travelled abroad to look for students. In an attempt to lessen the effect of the full-cost policy the school is trying to increase overseas student numbers by about 400. They have doubled the number of one year "general course" places for overseas students and introduced a range of new postgraduate diploma courses.

Professor Dahrendorf said the increase in numbers was a short-term policy designed to give the school time to rethink its future. There would not be a drop in quality.

Applications so far made the LSE optimistic yet cautious. Home applications were up by 8.7 per cent compared with a national average of 4 per cent. Overseas undergraduate applications were down by 5.5 per cent, compared with the national average of 12 per cent and overseas postgraduate applications show a 1 per cent fall on 1979 but this does not reflect late applications.

Professor Dahrendorf said he did not believe that the universities had over-reacted to the change in the overseas student policy and that there were many problems ahead.

UGC 'overstepped the mark' over Russian

by Paul Flather

The University Grants Committee exceeded its own term of reference when it recommended that Russian studies at 19 universities should be phased out or closed, the National Union of Students said this week.

The NUS says in a written response to the Atkinson report on Russian studies that the UGC is generally undemocratic, unrepresentative and unresponsive to society's educational needs.

The UGC seems to have been reduced to a conveyor-belt for Government policy. It was not even adhering to its original terms of reference which were designed to protect the universities from direct "ministerial directives", says the NUS.

The union calls for a broader review of Russian studies which goes beyond a "narrowly statistical and demand-orientated approach". Student choices to study Russian should not be the only factor taken into account by such a review.

The NUS also points to the increasing tension in international relations as a major reason for actually encouraging Russian studies "more energetically".

If Britain is to help maintain peace and cooperation, its educational system has a special responsibility to challenge misunderstandings and unjustified suspicion on

both sides of the ideological division.

It calls for greater understanding of the language, culture and history of other societies at present—particularly of the Soviet Union.

It also warns against turning a "rationalization" of education into simple cut-cutting exercises. No student should be denied the chance of studying Russian at whatever level they wish, it says.

The remit of this new review should be extended to include the study of other East European and Northern Asian societies and of the non-Russian populations in the USSR. It should be carried out by a working party which includes representatives from the teaching unions, industrial, cultural and community groups, as well as the UGC subject panels.

The union strongly opposes recommendations in the Atkinson report to phase out Russian studies at Keele, Lancaster, Queen Mary College, Reading, Sheffield, Sussex and the University of East Anglia. The departments have proved their worth irrespective of their size, it says.

East Anglia opens doors to adults

In what it describes as an important new commitment to continuing education the University of East Anglia has launched a scheme enabling local adults to take part time hours degrees alongside full time undergraduates.

The first course being offered under the scheme is in English history. Local people who are able to spend about three hours a week at the university and about 12 hours a week in private study will be able to qualify for an honours degree in five years.

Dr Patricia Hollis, a course organizer, said: "We know that for the university, our teaching and the president's message, students with their wide experience."

We also hope that the course will make a modest contribution to continuing and community education in our area. The university believes that its flexible structure is uniquely suitable for a venture of this kind.

NUS executive defends its deal with tobacco company

The executive of the National Union of Students has defended a promotional deal with a leading tobacco company in spite of an increasing backlash of criticism from some students and ministers.

Mr George Younger, the junior health minister, has expressed grave concern at the deal, and Mr David Ennals, former secretary of state for social services, has urged the NUS to drop the deal.

Both attacked the agreement, made with Philip Morris, the second largest tobacco company, which will increase the social acceptability of smoking, particularly among the young.

He added that under the present voluntary agreement, between the tobacco industry and the government, companies are required to aim their advertisements only at adult smokers. The companies are asked not to encourage people, particu-

larly the young, to start smoking. The agreement is being renegotiated at the moment.

Mr Ennals described the deal as appalling. "The NUS are being naive in the extreme if they say they can undertake a deal such as this without making a judgment as to the merits of the deal," he said.

The decision was taken last January by the executive after the NUS Marketing committee had recommended the deal be accepted. Details of the agreement will be considered by the executive at its next meeting.

Mr Trevor Phillips, NUS president, said the agreement had been accepted in principle. "As a union we have no policy on smoking, so we took this decision solely with regard to the commercial interests of our union."

"But we can do without all the self-righteousness which has been launched against us, particularly from people who have never had anything strong to say against smoking in the past," he said.

Strathclyde union attack on university cutbacks

by Olga Wojras, Scottish Correspondent

The Government has increased spending on defence, but it is Britain's industrial and social future that most urgently needs defending, according to Strathclyde University's joint union committee.

To mark May 9, designated a day of action against cuts in university spending, the joint union committee, which includes the association of University Teachers and Strathclyde Students' Association, the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staff, and the National and Local Government Officers' Association, has handed over a document at the Scottish office in Glasgow outlining the danger to Strathclyde region and to the country caused by the university cuts.

The Scottish office and Scottish development agency, says the document, have been pressing the technical colleges and universities to train more technicians and graduate engineers. But because of central government policy, a technological university like Strathclyde will turn out 300 fewer engineers, scientists and economists over the next four years.

The document quotes the newly published study of Britain's industrial performance by Keith Pavitt as saying that technical innovation is an essential feature in competi-

tiveness.

Britain is failing to innovate, says the committee, because research is seriously underfunded. "In the past, government finance for research and development has enabled universities to give a service to industry. Now, university departments are turning to industry itself for funding. Twenty-five private companies, some of them foreign, funded research at Strathclyde University in 1979. But at a time when British industry is itself in difficulty and cutting back on research spending, already lower than that of its major competitors, which is to be expected, funding will make those university departments and their research capabilities even more vulnerable in the medium and long term," says the document.

It also states that there is little provision of higher education appropriate to meeting the country's needs in relation to micro-technology. Strathclyde has recently started two new courses in micro-processor applications, courses which it cannot afford but believes the country cannot afford not to have, says the document.

"Linked to Britain's incapacity to adapt there is a xenophobia which threatens to lead the country into increasing isolationism. This is reflected in the government's policy on overseas students who are to be driven away by fees higher than those in most parts of the world."

Staff hold anti-Government meetings

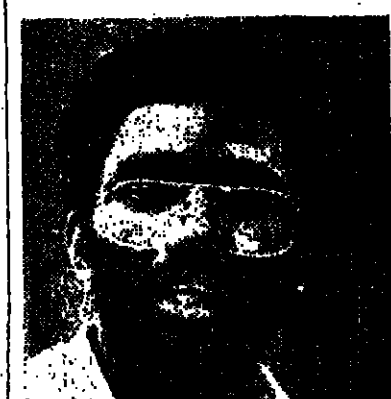
University academic staff throughout the United Kingdom will today be holding campus meetings to protest against the Government's financial stringency.

The meetings, which should be non-disruptive, are a substitute for the TUC Day of Action on the 14th. In many cases members of other unions have pledged their support. In Scotland there will be a lobby of the Conservative and Unionist

Party conference being held in Perth.

The purpose of the campus meetings will be to inform members of the implications of Government financial policy, to draw attention to the overseas student fees policy, to stress the scant attention being paid to research and to protest at the effects of level funding.

Phillips turns down race board offer



Trevor Phillips: a rejection.

Mr Trevor Phillips, who relieves this summer as president of the National Union of Students, has turned down an invitation to become a member of the Commission for Racial Equality.

Mr Phillips said his reasons were personal and political but they had nothing to do with demands from some sections of the black community to "boycott" the CRE.

In a letter to the Minister of State at the Home Office, Mr Timothy Raison, he wrote that he believed in the need for a legally independent statutory authority, such as the CRE.

In spite of my criticisms of the CRE's lack of vigour, drive and leadership, its sometimes chaotic organisation, and its undoubtedly adequate personnel I have always argued for a change in its role rather than its abandonment," he said.

Mr Phillips said that if he joined the CRE he would lose his position as an independent external critic and the freedom to persuade people to improve the body rather than ignore it.

His decision will clearly be a blow to the Home Office which is trying to head off criticism that it has been trying to staff the CRE with "political stooges."

Three cases to test 'overseas' student label

At least three High Court cases testing the Government's definition of an overseas student are to go ahead following the clarification of various aspects of policy by the Department of Education and Science.

A meeting, requested by the United Kingdom Council for Overseas Students, took place last week by the local authority associations, discussed the implementation of the new fee levels for overseas students and the interpretation of "ordinary residence" for the purposes of fees and grants.

But the talks proved inconclusive and with none set for the future, the stage is set for legal battles to try to extend the qualification as home students. UKCOSA had hoped for a relaxation of residence qualifications, reducing the period from three years to two.

A circular issued last month by the Council of Local Education Authorities made it clear that three years' study in Britain would not qualify for fees at the home rate of concession for grants.

Representatives of the DES confirmed that this was the Government's intention at last week's meeting and no change is likely unless court action forces a reappraisal. Several of the bodies concerned with overseas students believe that the definition will not be upheld in the courts and are pressing ahead with individual cases.

The first is likely to concern an Iranian student at Imperial College, London, who would have qualified as a home student under the straightforward three-year residence rule. A preliminary hearing has already been held in his appeal against classification as an overseas student and the case is expected to be heard before the summer.

The local authorities would like a statutory definition of residence qualifications but CLEA has told its members that the prospect of early agreement is remote. Although the DES recognises the confusion surrounding the awarding authorities and students alike, it does not consider the time right for new guidance.

Students and lecturers want new YOP guidelines

by Patricia Santinelli

A strong plea for new guidelines to increase the present educational provision within the Youth Opportunity Programme was made by the leading lecturers' union and the National Union of Students this week.

There is a need now to develop a set of general guidelines on the content of the educational input in YOP and its use in relation to each of the major pathways that YOP graduates take, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education and the NUS say. "These would give currency to the education and training received by trainees and facilitate their continuing in full or part-time further education."

Natthe and the NUS say that the Manpower Services Commission has no coherent policy on the matter and that only one-fifth of trainees obtain some sort of educational input. They point out that the activities undertaken by those obtaining further education or training are from "learning" to look for jobs" (39 per cent) to "learn about tools or materials" (35.7 per cent) to "something else" (33.1 per cent).

None of these different activities or undertakings are the core of trainees and thus no common core of study appears to exist. Natthe and the NUS point out. "Moreover, the balance between these varies according to whether they are employed in skill centres, colleges of further education or the workplace and no matching process seems to occur."

Natthe and the NUS believe that every entrant to YOP should go through a short induction course. This would give them a general understanding of the programme's purposes and help to channel them into the area which would best fulfil their needs and ambitions.

On completing YOP, they recommend that every trainee should be given a certificate evaluating a profile of the skills mastered and the experiences obtained. Moreover they say ways of giving this certificate national validity in terms of employment and further education requirements should also be examined.

Natthe urges greater powers for programme 'trust'

A much wider role and powers should be given to the "Trust" proposed by the Independent Broadcasting Authority to provide and coordinate back-up resources for educational programmes on Channel Four.

This is the view of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, which believes that such a body should not

be limited to channel four but encompass all channels, including BBC 1 and 2.

"We do not underestimate the difficulties of achieving such a body but we believe it is essential if duplication and waste are to be avoided", Natthe says.

Natthe wants the IBA to establish an Educational Advisory Body representative of all interested bodies. It does not believe that the pre-



Class members in an English and Communications skills group.

Bradford to run special courses for redundant textile workers

Bradford College is running a series of special courses for 80 workers made redundant at the end of April by a textile firm based in the city.

The courses were set up after shop stewards and management at Associated Weavers approached the college saying that 300 workers would lose their jobs when part of the firm's Bradford factory was closed.

The college has already run a series of successful courses known as "Lift Off" for about 300 workers made redundant in 1978 by another Bradford company, Thorn Consumer Electronics.

The workers will attend courses for no more than 21 hours a week to remain eligible for unemployment benefits at the same time. Enrolment on the courses, which will last between six and 10 weeks, does not mean the courses have to be completed. Bradford Council and Associated Weavers are jointly funding the courses.

The courses include catering, typewriting, car repair, computer communication skills, introduction to computer programming, statistics, a sound editing and a production course.

Mr Joe Mitchell, the head of the union studies at Bradford College, said: "The college accepts a responsibility to use its resources to help people cope with the impact of being declared redundant."

Our approach is one of identifying the particular needs of the workforce and then seeing how the college can help."

The college is working closely with the Manpower Services Commission and the Job Centre. Places on the courses have also been offered to 150 textile workers made redundant recently by other firms in Bradford.

Moreover, the association wants the law on copyright to be changed so as to enable recording of material for educational use. The IBA time it suggests that the IBA ensure copyright clearance for all material broadcast on Channel Four. The association is also asking for a permanent opportunity to comment on the quality of the educational broadcasting content.

Grants to industry for study leave call

by Ngain Crequer

An earmarked levy/grant system for industry would encourage more continuing education, Sir Robert Clayton, technical director of the General Electric Company Limited, said last week.

Speaking at a conference, "The Universities and Continuing Education", organized jointly by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals and the Universities Council for Adult Education, said he favoured this system much more than any form of paid educational leave.

Such a system would be specialist, equitable, and avoid the pitfalls of bureaucracy involved in other schemes. He said he was not in favour of the Finniston right to subsidised leave as it was too simplistic a formula for dealing with different types of employment.

"Finance for continuing education is an essential part of the operating costs of a company and must be recognized as such. It is an investment in people, who are an essential asset in business", he said.

But he said that finance involved not only payment for education but extra people in business. If 5 per cent of staff were out, involved in some form of continuing education, that meant there must be 5 per cent extra people.

Sir Robert said that he had no doubt that in industry, particularly technical industries like his own, there would be a need for continuing education throughout a person's career.

Although this was not new, the difference was that now there was much more technology, with a wider range and a much faster rate of change. Information and energy would be two vital technologies in the next decade, he said.

"My starting point is that for many graduate staff undergraduate courses should not be specific training but provide an education in which their logical and critical faculties are developed to the greatest possible extent. I would much rather take a broadly educated physicist than someone trained in a specialist technology."

Graduates needed to keep up with their subject as it developed and changed. They have to move to new specializations, and they should have an awareness of what was happening in related fields.

He said people also needed to acquire some management skills to help them understand, for example, basic accountancy, industrial relations, project planning and control and information systems.

But the development of the individual should not be confined to the technical field. "The literacy and understanding of communication skills and attitudes and relationships needed to be improved."

"I would favour a cultural break from time to time. I would like to think that people immersed in these new technologies would have a better idea of literature and history", he said. Non-technical people needed a basic understanding of technology, mathematics, engineering and computing.

He said there was a need for a variety of approaches to continuing education to take account of differing people, companies and subjects. The use of individual initiative, whereby people could use their own time in their own way, should not be forgotten.

There should be long courses only in exceptional circumstances, if it was clear what the next assign-

ment of the individual would be and that he or she would not generally be returning to the same job. A one-year course was necessary to recognize how greatly mature students differed from school leavers and how many educational, social and financial problems they often faced.

The mature student often lacked entry qualifications, was unclear about what he or she wanted to study, and was often impressed by his or her own inferiority created by earlier lack of opportunity or failure.

And if he is working class he becomes conscious of a gulf between his culture and that of the university, which creates another difficulty.

Added to this were probable domestic problems created by the existence of a family, travel costs and the difficulty of leaving a career and then not knowing what one would come back to.

What was necessary was a comprehensive adult educational guidance service to help adults to overcome their personal, educational and financial problems when about to study.

He noted with regret that one after another experimental guidance agencies had run for a little while on few statutory resources but had then had to close down.

A further problem was that when the adult students started at university they encountered the younger students and then discovered the full reality of their deficiencies in training and academic study. "That so few crack up is attributable to their own and to their tutors' understanding and assistance", he said.

But he warned: "If numbers increase departmental resources will be insufficient to provide that vital support. Mature students are inevitably in some ways more expensive than 18-year-olds and additional resources will be required to give them the attention they deserve."

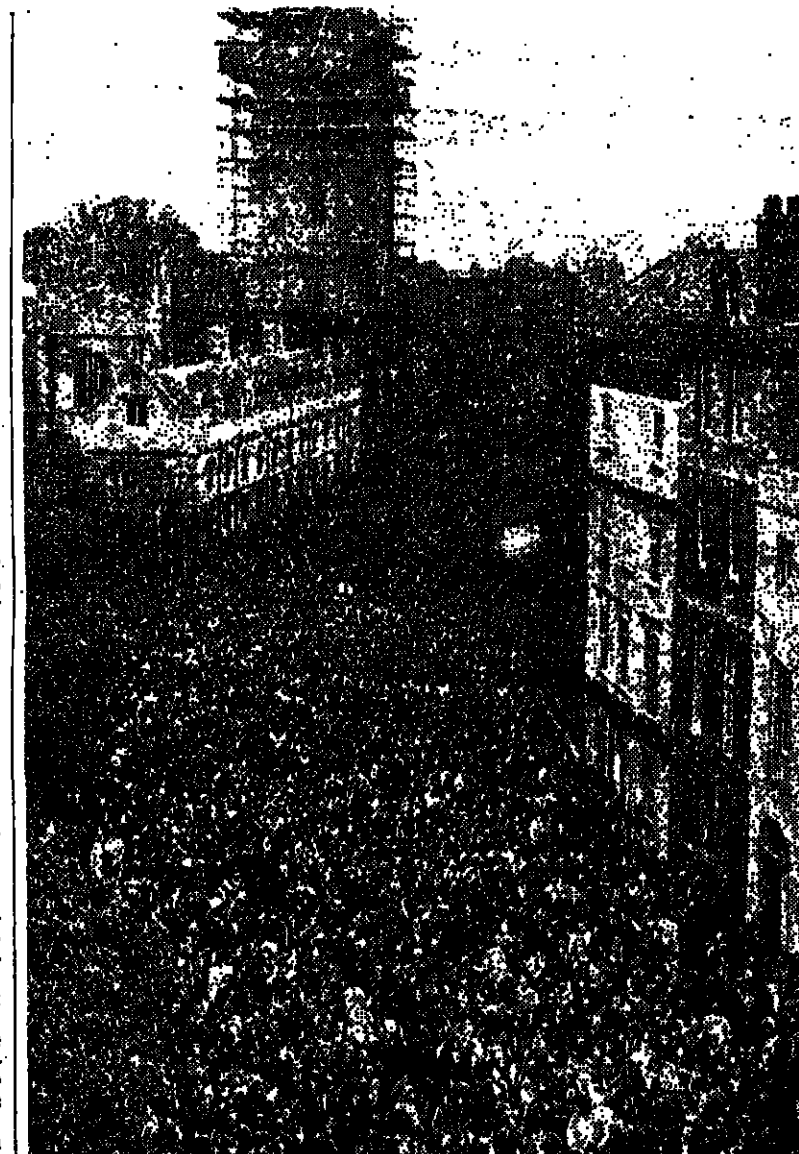
Urgent attention would have to be given to the financial aspects of study if there was to be any major development in mature students. One thing that should be looked at was the idea of mandatory grants for part-time degrees.

Professor A. H. Halsey, director of the department of social and administrative studies at Oxford, contradicted the majority of speakers who praised the universities for their work in continuing education.

In a seminar rather than speech he accused the universities of not taking the subject seriously. He said that only about 2 per cent of a potential 20 million adults were being reached and the financial commitment was a mere 1 per cent of their total spending. Even if he said that, it would still be trivial, he said.

He pinpointed two different types of continuing education, that which added to a person's qualifications or job experience and which increased his standing in the community and that which came from a more liberal academic strain. He forebaw a collision between the two forms.

He also questioned whether the universities were the appropriate instrument for continuing education, which implied reaching out to new groups and classes. The universities, he said, would have to decide what was their function.



Oxford University students through the High Street for their traditional celebration of May Morning last week.

Irish want planning body

by John O'Leary

Lecturers in Northern Ireland have told the Chilvers committee Higher Education that there should be a new planning body dealing with all post-school education in the province.

The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education has made two submissions to the Higher Education Review Group—one from its national executive and one from its Northern Ireland region. Both call for the establishment of a body along the lines of the proposed Advanced Further Education Council for Wales.

Like the Welsh council, the Irish equivalent should include further and higher education within a remit, Nafthe believes. An advanced work is carried out only at the Ulster Polytechnic and the colleges of education but a majority of further education institutions in the Six Counties are inoperative.

But the union would like the Chilvers committee's recommendations to go further to allow a planning body to encompass courses at Queen's University, Belfast, and the New University of Ulster. "It is an opportunity which, because of different funding arrangements, is not so readily available in the corner of England and Wales and any such development in Northern Ireland would be regarded with the greatest interest", Nafthe says.

"Such a development would be consistent with the view that the planning of higher education should relate to courses and not solely to institutions", the union added. It would enable courses, particularly on a part-time basis, to be distributed adequately to provide opportunities for the entire community.

The union recognizes that there would be disagreement over what the new body should relate itself to. Northern Ireland is the rest of the United Kingdom. Although the Northern Ireland region does not touch on this point, the Nafthe executive declares that in the present circumstances patterns of provision cannot be separated from England and Wales.

Following various changes in secondary education and the introduction of educational maintenance allowances for those over 16, Nafthe foresees an increase in the number of students going into higher education in Ulster. To make full use of the potential of the province, more courses should be established and adequate maintenance grants made freely available to the submissions claim.

They also believe there is a need for an expansion of certain areas of teacher education, cope with more service courses, changing curricula, compulsory induction programmes and training for further education courses.

However, Nafthe makes no recommendations on particular courses or institutions. Such decisions should be left to the proposed planning body, which would determine the provision in line with its own philosophy for higher education.

The polytechnic was chosen for the trust because it already had large communications and environmental studies departments. The college also stands near contrasting environments, including historic sites, national parks, historic sites, and as Chester, and a major urban centre.

Mr David Fletcher, head of the environmental and geographical studies department, who will be chair-

North American News

Canada sinks \$50m into discovery parks project

from Clive Cookson

WASHINGTON In Canada, as in the United States and Britain, there is much lamentation over the lack of interaction between academe and industry. However, an ambitious attempt to bridge the gulf between the two sides is getting under way in British Columbia.

The Government of Canada's westernmost province plans to spend \$50m or more to set up a series of research parks—on known as discovery parks—on university and college campuses. The three major universities in the province (the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria) will have one each, and the four will be associated with the British Columbia Institute of Technology, a two-year technical college.

The response of the university community has been mixed. Some people are very enthusiastic, others express caution and even criticism. A fear expressed by academics is that the discovery parks will give industry too much leverage over the activities of the universities.

Another is that British Columbia's praiseworthy Social Credit government will divert money from the universities themselves to the parks.

But the enthusiasts, such as George Pedersen, president of Simon Fraser University, discount these fears and believe the discovery parks will be of mutual benefit to the universities, to the firms that move on to them, and to the economy of British Columbia.

Dr Pedersen is one of many Canadians who think the country has not made sufficient use of its academic resources. He told the THES that he persuaded senior administrators and faculty members at Simon Fraser, many of whom were originally very suspicious of the proposed discovery park, to accept far less university control over the park than they had originally wanted.

Simon Fraser has signed an agreement to lease 80 acres of land to Discovery Parks Incorporated, the government-financed quango that will operate the venture. The university has specified the types of firm that will be eligible for its park, but the businessmen who sit on the board of Discovery Parks Incorporated convinced Dr Pedersen that it was unrealistic for the university to have a say in the operation of each tenant on the park.

"We had to persuade the university that this was primarily a business venture," said John Macdonald, chairman of the board. No company would agree to set up a

research and development unit on the park if it were subject to interference from the university, he added.

At the University of British Columbia, the biggest academic institution in the province, the issue of how much control the university would have over its research park is causing more difficulty. Negotiations between UBC and discovery parks over the proposed 58-acre research park there have been in progress for many months and a university spokesman said agreement might not be reached for many months more.

A major sticking point in the discussions at UBC is whether companies should be allowed to carry out small scale manufacturing operations on the research park there. According to Robert Stewart, chief executive at British Columbia's ministry of universities and science, UBC is insisting that no manufacturing take place beyond the pilot plant stage, while Discovery Parks Inc. maintains that would be an unreasonable restriction because there is often no clear distinction between R and D and production for small high-technology companies.

Light manufacturing will be permitted on the parks at Simon Fraser University and the British Columbia Institute of Technology. The 100-

acre park at the institute is expected to be developed faster than the three university parks (possibly because less academic pride is at stake). The Government has already committed \$13m to put up a multiple tenancy block there for companies that are too small to need their own buildings, and to construct roads and other necessary infrastructure for the park.

The province's third university, the University of Victoria, is taking a very low-key approach to the whole idea. It wants to have a small discovery park, but in its own buildings and under strict university control. Discussions with Discovery Parks Inc over the way this would fit in with their overall plans have not yet got under way.

Although prospective tenants have been lined up for all four discovery parks, people associated with the project say it is still too early to tell how the character of the parks will develop. "I think each will tend to take on the character of the institution it is associated with," said Dr Macdonald. "We will try to encourage companies to group together in a logical fashion."

High technology electronics companies will probably form the largest group, but any firm engaged in research and development is eligible. Dr Pedersen is keen to attract consulting firms doing

research in the social sciences to Simon Fraser.

British Columbia's discovery parks will not have a close counterpart anywhere else in the world. But Patrick McGeer, the science and universities minister, who was primarily responsible for convincing the government to back the idea, has looked at several research parks in the United States with his colleagues. Dr Macdonald said the three main models were the Stanford Industrial Park, the University of Utah Research Park and Research Triangle Park in North Carolina.

The Discovery Parks Board has so far relied on word of mouth and personal contacts to let prospective tenants know of the facilities available, but in the summer it will launch a world-wide publicity drive. Although high technology companies in the United States and Canada will be the prime targets—particularly electronics firms now located in California's overcrowded silicon valley—the board is also hoping to attract firms from Britain and Europe.

Everyone is hoping for the maximum possible interaction between these firms and faculty members at the host universities. "We will be doing everything in our power to lubricate the process," Dr Macdonald promised.

Past funding higher than the future

by our North American editor

The future outlook for federal support for academic research in the United States may be cloudy, but new figures from the NSF suggest a bright picture of the recent past.

Federal funding of research and development in colleges and universities rose by 15 per cent—8 per cent in real terms—in the fiscal year 1978, according to an analysis by the National Science Foundation. The NSF said 1978 was the third consecutive year in which Washington's support of academic research had shown a significant real increase. Between 1975 and 1978, funding grew by 22 per cent, after allowing for inflation. Between 1969—the end of the great 1960s expansion—and 1975 there had been no overall growth.

Light manufacturing will be permitted on the parks at Simon Fraser University and the British Columbia Institute of Technology. The 100-

The foundation found that total federal obligations to universities and colleges—meaning all United States government expenditure on these institutions—was \$7,500m in 1978. Non-science activities, mainly student grants and loans, came to \$3,500m, about 5 per cent more than 1977 in real terms.

Spending on what the NSF calls "academic science", which includes social sciences, came to \$4,000m in 1978. Of that total, \$3,400m was direct support for research and development projects, and the remaining \$600m was devoted to facilities and equipment, fellowships and training grants.

In 1976, the life sciences took 51 per cent of total government expenditure on R and D in colleges and universities, reflecting the rapid growth of the national institutes of health during the 1970s, while support for the physical sciences was declining. The next biggest field is engineering with 15 per cent, followed by physical sciences (13 per cent), environmental sciences (8 per cent) and social sciences (6 per cent).

The Foundation Annual League Table of the 100 institutions receiving the most federal support has a new leader, Johns Hopkins University. Hopkins leapt ahead of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the previous leader, because its applied Physics Laboratory (APL), funded mainly by the US Navy, became an integral component of the university in 1978. Previously the laboratory had been financed directly by the navy and did not count as part of Johns Hopkins.

Clive Cookson, North American Editor, The Times Higher Education Supplement, National Press Building, Room 441, Washington DC 20045, Telephone: (202) 638 6765.

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Law lecturer attacks Bill

An Aberdeen University law lecturer has outlined his alternative proposals on police powers, the most contentious issue in the controversial Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill, now being discussed in the House of Commons.

Dr Rob Baldwin's proposals, published in the latest issue of the bulletin of the Scottish Legal Action Groups, are in response to the Government's call to the bill's critics to provide alternatives.

Dr Baldwin argues that the Government's general police power of detention on suspicion goes too far and will not help the police. His alternative is a two part system whereby "helping with police enquiries" would be done either voluntarily or in limited circumstances, under compulsion.

The voluntary system would involve a person signing a form consenting to help the police. The "visitor" to a station would be free to leave at any time and have a solicitor present at all times including during questioning.

Compulsory detention would be permitted only in cases of extreme urgency, where there was a real likelihood of interference with witnesses or evidence. A limit of four hours would apply, compared with the present proposal of six hours, questioning would be recorded, and either a solicitor would be present throughout or a form declining solicitor signed by the detainee and senior officer of the station.

Dr Baldwin claims that as well as protecting the rights of the individual, the system would also guard the reputation of the police since accuracy of uniform detention might be countered by reference either to the solicitor present at questioning or to one of the two proposed forms.

Students following this four-year vocationally-oriented degree course will graduate as applied chemists, after attending Napier College for the first year, the Scottish College of Textiles for the second year, following industrial training for the third year, and selecting their specialism at either college for the fourth year.

Both colleges have welcomed the opportunity to cooperate, and believe that the recently given approval of the Council for National Academic Awards was achieved by the provision of separate courses by each college.

Mr Lloyd Jones says there is "no logical need for fundamental changes in the structure of government bodies".

The Weaver report, implemented in higher education in 1970, was a compromise between all the interests and ought not to be changed, Mr Lloyd Jones says.

Certainly, the department, which as providers of funds to nearly 40 institutions of higher and further education, are in a position rather akin to the largest local education authorities, have no such intention.

"This is not to say that we do not have the same concern about

Firms liaise over new course

Napier College, Edinburgh and the Scottish College of Textiles, Glasgow, are to launch a BSc and

with course in applied chemistry this September.

The course, which was prepared with close liaison with industry, offers career opportunities through its two final year specialisations in polymers (Napier College) or colour science (Scottish College of Textiles).

This new unusual joint venture takes advantage of the specialist provision at both colleges and also leads to large resource savings over the provision of separate courses by each college.

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Councils warned off college controls

by Peter David

The Department of Education and Science has its intention of acceding to local government requests for close control of the polytechnics and colleges it maintains, a senior civil servant says in a report published last week.

Writing in *Where do we go from here?* a report published by the Further Education Staff College at Combe Lodge, higher education under secretary Mr David Lloyd Jones, warns local education authorities not to press for changes in the balance of power between local education committees and governing bodies.

What one new detest is a growing view among local authorities that the whole subject of college government requires a drastic review, and not in the relatively modest way subscribed to by their representatives on the Oakes working party," he writes.

One can well imagine that the pressure in this local authority associations comes from the members who deal with the larger institutions—front education authorities who in earlier days found pride in their local polytechnic, but who are now beginning to see it as a stepping-stone to a check on their power.

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Certainly, the department, which as providers of funds to nearly 40 institutions of higher and further education, are in a position rather akin to the largest local education authorities, have no such intention.

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Both colleges have welcomed the opportunity to cooperate, and believe that the recently given approval of the Council for National Academic Awards was achieved by the provision of separate courses by each college.

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Overseas News

Businessmen warn of specialist shortage

from James Hutchinson BONN
The West German Chamber of Industry and Commerce has warned that unless there is a drastic revision of educational policy there will soon be a surplus of graduates with the wrong qualifications—and a serious shortage of people trained for specialized jobs in industry.

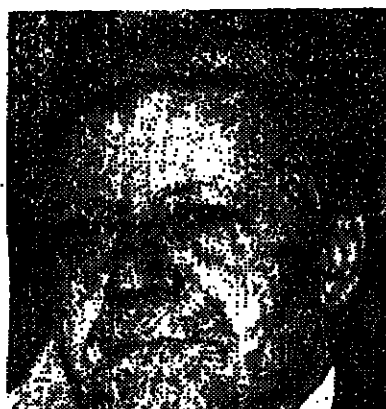
In a report which is attracting wide attention, the chamber said it was already clear that the career prospects for graduates were limited. At present the public services offered most opportunities, accepting some 60 per cent of each year's total of new graduates. But it was intended that the intake should be gradually reduced to 35 per cent. And it was unlikely that industry would be able to absorb more than 20,000 graduates a year.

However, despite a stubbornly high level of unemployment, there was already a shortage of skilled workers and specialists. The situation was bound to get worse because the number of grammar school leavers, students and graduates was increasing while the number of 15 and 16-year-olds starting vocational training was rapidly falling.

The state and industry must react quickly to prevent the development of an educational system which was losing contact with the "vocational world". Politicians of all parties had long ago recognised the dangers, but had done very little to reverse the trend.

The federal Chancellor, Herr Helmut Schmidt, had said: "It's a scandal that almost all our energies and resources are being put to academic use—in every sense of the word." The federal government had pointed out that the income of graduates would one day not be higher than that of skilled workers and the finance minister and the Linder had forecast that by 1985 there would be a surplus of half a million graduates.

But though politicians have done



Helmut Schmidt: "a scandal"

more talking about the problem than taking action to solve it. A lot of young people are heading the warnings. The proportion of grammar school pupils—in their final year—intending to study went down from 90 per cent at the beginning of the 1970s to 67 per cent last year. Nonetheless, as a consequence of the birthrate bulge years, the student population will continue to increase.

German industry is becoming alarmed by the fact that despite the rise in the number of students, university courses in the natural sciences and engineering are becoming less and less popular. In these fields some universities are already operating below capacity, while other departments, engaged in courses that have little to do with vocational preparation, are full to overflowing.

The chamber of commerce and industry suggests that graduates with poor career prospects should be encouraged to take vocational training courses. It also urges the universities to co-operate more closely with industry and generally with the "world outside"—and to rearrange curricula to take account of the country's "real needs".

Rebel Catholic to head new institute

by Günther Kloss

A temporary solution has been found to the vexed question of what to do with "Rebel" Catholic theologian Professor König at Tübingen in southern Germany.

König, who holds the chair of Ecumenical Theology, last December lost the Roman Catholic church's *missio canonica*, the right to teach. Apart from the immediate problem of his legal status in the university and his position as a fully tenured civil servant, this ruling brought up the nebulous question of the relationship between Catholic church and the State.

The university, with the approval of regional minister of higher education, has now decided to remove Professor König's institute and his staff from the faculty of theology and continue as an independent central institute of the university.

Thus the university president, chief architect of this compromise, succeeds in complying with the local bishop's insistence that König must be deprived of an official role in the faculty and in the formal teaching of Catholic theology. He also manages to preserve Professor König's academic and civil service status, thus defending a university teacher's right to decide freely what to teach and publish.

This diplomatic solution suits the CDU-government of Baden-Württemberg who wanted to avoid open conflict with the Church, and with Professor König's former colleagues who were divided on his future in the faculty.

König appears to be happy with the outcome. Although he is still trying to get the Vatican congregation's verdict reversed and had initially insisted on remaining within the faculty he now welcomes the idea of a Max-Planck-type institute which will allow him to teach, research and publish freely and will also relieve him of a considerable administrative and examining burden.

Government sets out to reorganize universities

from A. S. Abraham

BOMBAY
India's University Grants Commission, the federal watchdog of higher education, is worried about how universities are expanding haphazardly and would like to see the establishment of a planning board for every university. The board's main job will be to draw up a "perspective plan" over 10 or 15 years.

In a detailed proposal explained by the UGC chairman, Professor Satish Chandra, the board will be headed by a pro-vice-chancellor or a dean of planning. It will prepare, in addition to the long-term "perspective plan," annual "action plans" laying down the larger plan into targets for student numbers, faculty extension and building expansion.

The rationale for special planning boards is that vice-chancellors are now so busy with routine administration and especially with handling militant student, teacher and non-teaching staff bodies that they have no time for long-range thinking and planning.

The UGC's concern over the chaotic growth of universities is moderate, too, by accusations that it has worried too much about central universities (that is, those directly run by the federal government) and too little about the rest,

which form the vast majority of the country's universities. The law, while theoretically autonomous, is under the control of provincial governments who sponsor or fund them and fund them in the way they see fit.

The UGC gives them money well, which it has the right to do. It has the right to delay its aid sought-after recognition of the until it is convinced they have attained high enough standards to withdraw such recognition if they fail to maintain these standards. In practice, however, it rarely if ever applies these sanctions, pleading that "political pressures" prevent it from doing so.

Its answer to critics who charge it with having fostered a wide disparity between standards in central and state (provincial) universities is a new system of classification under which, according to the UGC chairman, all universities will be divided into "developed, developing and yet-to-be-developed" categories.

Over the next five years, 20 state universities will be picked out for special UGC attention until their standards are raised to those prevailing at central universities. It is not clear whether the 20 is long to the "developing" or "yet-to-be-developed" categories.

Laboratory cleared of blame for deaths of four scientists

from Lindsay Wright

WELLINGTON
Waikato University's biology isotope laboratory has been completely cleared of responsibility for the deaths of four former students, following a report from a four-man committee of inquiry set up by New Zealand's Department of Health.

The university's scientists most closely associated with the deaths have reacted strongly to the national publicity that followed the publication in the student newspaper *Nexus* in March, of claims that deaths from cancer may have been linked with lapses in safety procedures.

Under the chairmanship of senior physician Dr Michael Gilmour, the committee concluded that there was nothing to suggest that the handling of radioactive materials in the department of biological sciences was in any way defective.

The procedures and requirements, they said, might in fact be considered overcautious and even if handling radioactive materials by students had been careless, radiation doses received would be very small due to natural background.

While the outcome of the inquiry has vindicated the university, senior academic scientists remain dismayed by the widespread publicity given to the allegations. Chemistry professor Dr Michael Carr, a representative on the University of Waikato Council, says that the original *Nexus* article was based on anonymous information which was not checked with any staff member qualified to judge the accuracy of its scientific content.

Top salary controls feared

from Geoff Maalen

MELBOURNE
Australian university staff associations are concerned that legislation to control top salaries in the future could lead to a loss of their positions.

Last month the Federal Government announced it would alter the States Grants Territory Assistance Act to enable it to cut back on grants to universities and colleges and paying their senior staff above levels recommended by the Academic Salaries Tribunal.

According to the Federation of Australian University Staff Associations, if a university had its grant cut back but paid its senior staff the same, the extra amount would have to be paid from funds available for other academic positions. Although the practice is not supposed to be widespread, several tertiary institutions offer vice-chancellors and deans, or heads of departments, extra wages to attract top people.

General secretary of FAUSA, Mr Les Wallis, said: "If a university is paying its vice-chancellor \$13,000 above the recommended level and then penalised \$25,000 and then the vice-chancellor is one of our members' jobs." The recommended salary level for vice-chancellors is now \$14,900 and at the other end of the scale, the recommended salary for lecturers is \$2,400.

The chairman of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, Professor Don George, said difficulties could arise if universities were forced to pay their senior staff less than they were currently doing. He said that universities would be forced to pay their senior staff less than they were currently doing, which would be a disadvantage to the universities.

HIGHER EDUCATION REVISITED



Lord Robbins believes that an essential condition of expansion is unfulfilled. Here Peter David talks to him about his new book.

Committed to the last: a Grand Old Architect with two cheers for the system

At 82 Lord Robbins is the Grand Old Man of British higher education whose name will forever be associated with the great expansion of the universities that followed publication of the report of his committee in 1964. But in a book published yesterday, *Higher Education Revisited*, the architect of the modern university system is able to give his creation only two cheers.

To the central idea of expansion and the famous "principle" of access tagged with his name Lord Robbins remains doggedly committed. But he withholds the third cheer because he believes that an essential condition of expansion—that much of the growth should entail the provision of broad non-specialized undergraduate courses—has not been fulfilled.

Instead, Lord Robbins says, English (although not Scottish) universities have created more and more specialized undergraduate courses and thereby undermined their ability to turn out generally well-educated young men and women. Their turn the universities through their entrance requirements have imposed on schools a habit of specialization that forces children to choose dangerously early between arts and sciences.

In his book Lord Robbins describes this as little short of a national disgrace. In conversation he grows even more vehement, denouncing those professors who, in a scramble for self-aggrandizement, have promoted narrow honours degrees and neglected broad degrees more suited for the majority of students destined never to become dons or high experts.

In spite of this major disappointment, however, Lord Robbins is as staunch a defender of expansion as he is an advocate of reform. He rejects allegations that standards have declined and says that there may have been some improvement. He goes so far as to suggest that many universities might be advised to relax their entrance requirements, possibly by adopting the tripartite approach common in the United States.

He is angry about the "truly shocking" nature of student militancy over the past 12 years, which he says has left many of those who encountered it with an abiding sense of pollution. But he refuses to see it as the indictment of a generation.

He firmly believes that by far the greater majority of university students today are of a high quality and that the system has made in particular cases.

friendly and as intelligent as their predecessors and many, if not all, make at least as good use of their time.

Lord Robbins believes that most students are indifferent to the political affairs of their institutions, a trend he regrets. In his own university days, he recalls, student meetings were attended by the best students and discussions were of a high quality. Now they show the signs of the militancy, who are such bores for the most part.

The number of "deliberate and dedicated organizers of trouble" has always been small, he says, but they regard universities and polytechnics as fruitful ground for propaganda and agitation. They often exploit a large body of student who are "volatile, high-spirited youth, unreflecting if you like, but generous and apt to go off at half-cock at any suggestion of abuse of authority."

At bottom, he believes that student militancy is a symptom of the general erosion of faith in the ability of the social system to uphold human decency. Insecurity of the future and a feeling of impotence have added to the acid of doubt.

"Has there ever been a period of such general disillusion as this?" he asks.

But if his committee erred over its recommendation—countering the expansionist policy of the famous Woolwich speech—see create a unitary university system has since been vindicated, Lord Robbins says. The binary division had created "a most peculiar relationship" between polytechnics and universities.

In particular, Lord Robbins confesses to amusement at the comparison Mr Crosland made between the proposed polytechnics and the continental *Grandes Ecoles* and *Hochschulen*, which had always had an eminence superior to the ordinary universities.

On the evidence of his new book, Lord Robbins' views on higher education remain as steadfastly liberal as his economics. On some issues, his advocacy of loans and his characterization of the "cold" report as a "temperate monograph" are as much a part of his philosophy as his advocacy of expansion. But in his rigid defence of academic freedom and above all his dedication to the idea of higher education for all who can benefit from it, he remains the embodiment of liberal education.

posses that in most subjects grants or loans could be withheld before the age of 20, when most students were more mature and dedicated.

He is against the notion of universities inflicting "Long preposterous courses of education" on their students. But he believes that many university staff lack elementary skills of presentation and lecturing. He recalls being told by Graham Wallis "the great man of the school and the most intimate of my lecturers, that he had never seen a student who was not a failure."

As for loans, Lord Robbins is now sorry that his committee failed to see the "beauty" of Professor Alan Prest's scheme of loans in time to recommend its adoption in the report. He says the present system is one in which the not-so-able subsidize the clever, and the introduction of a loans system as therefore a very attractive notion.

The Robbins committee failed to recommend a loans scheme because it would be administratively cumbersome and would penalize students whose investment in higher education did not yield a financial return. But Lord Robbins now favours the scheme advocated by Professor Prest, whereby loans would be repaid only if the borrower's subsequent income passed a certain point.

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The 'dead debate' revived

In the last few weeks the steam has appeared to go out of the many campaigns against the introduction of full-cost fees for overseas students. Understandably, opponents of the policy seem to have exhausted their arguments and reluctantly accepted that the Government is in no mood to change its mind on the question this year.

But the issue is soon to be revived with the publication of two Select Committee reports assessing the likely impact of the new fees. One, an interim report by the Select Committee on Education, will examine the possible effects on higher education in Britain while the other, by the Foreign Affairs Committee's sub-committee on overseas development, is concerned with the implications for aid and development abroad.

The two are to be published simultaneously later this month to have maximum impact on policy considerations, such as they are at this stage of the fees saga. With two adept Labour chairmen, Mr Christopher Price and Mr Kevin McNamara, the chances of a joint verdict favourable to the Government are slim, despite the presence of a Conservative majority on both the main committees.

Indeed, a degree of dissatisfaction with the way the decision to raise fees was taken and, to a lesser extent, with the policy itself has been evident on both sides of the party line. Although the only real evidence of student recruitment to date (applications through the Universities Central Council for Admissions) tends to support ministers' view that the new fees will not lead to a catastrophic decline in student numbers, it will be surprising if there is not sufficient dissent in the two reports to rekindle the debate on the fees.

Certainly, the evidence heard by the two committees, though often speculative or anecdotal, has been overwhelmingly critical of the fee levels and pessimistic about the future. Virtually the only defenders of the decision have been the Government departments concerned.

Even they have been unable to stem disquiet among members of the sub-committee, in particular about the basis for the final decision and the level of consultation leading up to it. The fact that Dr Rhodes Boyson, under-secretary for higher education, and several senior civil servants were unwilling to say whether any inter-departmental discussions had taken place hardly increased confidence in the decision-making process on this occasion.

Impressive presentations of data by the Overseas Students Trust and the World University Service added to the impression that Treasury pressure for immediate savings may have precluded the high quality of research and the implication of raising fees to the Government's conception of "full-cost". Despite a more authoritative performance by Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education, before the Education Committee, little has been said to allay the fears of the institutions in Britain or the voluntary bodies concerned with conditions overseas.

On the contrary, Mr Carlisle made it quite clear that the policy would be reviewed only if it proved a disastrous failure and that there was little hope for others to slip through an escape route of exemption for special cases. Although students from REC countries have since been exempted, he was adamant that the necessary savings could only be made if the new levels applied to all other students.

Mr Carlisle specifically discounted the possibility of a lower rate for Commonwealth students, whose moral claim for special treatment was pressed by a number of witnesses and put most graphically by the High Commissioner for Sierra Leone, Dr Tom Mafuri. He accused the Government of deserting the Commonwealth at a crucial time, but Mr Carlisle knows that Commonwealth countries provide about half of the foreign students in Britain—no exemption for them

would negate the point of the policy.

Smaller groups, such as the Vietnamese, Bosnian, and Cypriot students, are still officially under consideration but their chances of success are not good. A special case has been put for refugees generally but the Boat People already resident in Britain were the only category who stood a realistic chance of exemption.

Cyprus, too, put a good case to the sub-committee via the Council for Education in the Commonwealth, which has been backed up by a delegation of Cypriot parents lobbying ministers and various interested groups. It was said that the island had been actively discouraged from establishing a university by the British government on the grounds that facilities were available in this country. Since the parents claim that Cyprus now has the third highest percentage rate of university students per head of population, with no institution of its own, their argument would appear to be a powerful one.

However, Cypriots will be far from alone in their difficulty in meeting the new fee levels. Both Mr Carlisle and Dr Boyson have conceded the point made by a succession of witnesses that, even if full-cost fees do not bring an immediate and serious decline in overall numbers, they will undoubtedly alter the mix of nationalities still further.

Already the proportion of students from wealthier developing countries, particularly the oil-rich nations of the Middle East, is growing at the expense of the poorest. This trend can only be exacerbated by the new fees, which are likely to force a number of countries to look elsewhere.

A submission from the Thai embassy underlined this point and also stressed the importance of a number of countries place on their educational links with Britain. The Civil Service, administrative, legal and educational systems in Thailand are all based on the British models. Four recent Thai Prime Ministers were educated here. MPs' sub-committee were plainly impressed by the strength of feeling and clarity of argument exhibited by the Thais.

By contrast, the views expressed to Mr Price's committee on the likely effects of a new policy in this country were mostly well known already, though none the less important for that. The Select Committee was left in no doubt that the fears of the universities in particular that their numbers will decline seriously were heartfelt. Mr Carlisle's hint that the University Grants Committee could make special provision to help out those hardest hit will not be enough to reassure them.

However, only this will tell whether the Government or the institutions are correct about the impact of the new fees on overall numbers. Since the full effect will take at least three years to work its way through the system, it will be the international mix in this country and the educational contribution to overseas aid which suffer first.

Both Dr Boyson and Mr Carlisle have argued that the new conditions are the province of the Foreign Office and the Overseas Development Administration rather than the Department of Education and Science. Just as school meals are a social, not an educational, service, overseas students are the concern of the DES only in so far as they affect the British education system, they say.

Theoretically, this is obviously a logical position and, if one was starting from scratch, responsibilities might well be allocated differently. In reality, however, with an aid budget already declining in real terms there is no likelihood of a further transfer of responsibility and if the DES chooses to turn a blind eye to the consequences of its policy, the slide away from the poorest nations must surely accelerate.

In the rush to cut public expenditure, fringe considerations are the inevitable victims and ministers' and civil servants' evidence to the two committees clearly indicates that overseas students are likely to come into this category. The MPs' reports, due for publication on May 20, should help to focus some attention on the implications of the rise in fees. Even if they are too late to change the Government's collective mind, it is to be hoped that they will alert some hitherto uninterested colleagues to the dangers inherent in the policy.

John O'Leary

Italy's staff law runs into snags

from Uli Schmetzer

ROME
Bizarre discrepancies in Italy's new university staff law have prompted the National University Council and teaching unions to take a hard second look at the legislation.

"The law needs definite changes if it is going to serve the purpose for which it was devised," said a union spokesman.

Although Italy's new education minister, Adolfo Sardi, has said he will accept modifications to the law, academic argue the legislation is "rather than 'modifications' before the final version is ratified by parliament this summer."

The law has already been drastically diluted. The original proposal intended to exclude from teaching professors with a second job outside the campus. That endeavour was swiftly modified to exclude from tenure only politicians and state or regional officials.

But in a country where public figures, traditionally, hold university posts, the proposal, not unexpectedly, met with stiff opposition.

And while the senior professors

from the very parliamentarians supposed to approve it. In no time it was replaced by an inconsequential substitute which gave professors the chance to opt either for full or part-time teaching.

But even that proposal was left in the balance when it was accepted temporarily by parliament in February. The requirement for both part and full-time teaching was a 12-hour week campus attendance. In addition, the law penalized with lower salaries the part-time professors.

"Only a fool would opt for part-time if he had to spend the same amount of time on the campus as his full-time colleague," commented a "house engineering professor."

The wage sanctions were considered a senior professor on full-time would earn an initial £6,500 a year (with a ceiling of £10,200 after 14 years' service) while a part-time colleague would earn only £4,500 with a £7,400 ceiling.

Still, the privileges of the senior professors, the so-called *docenti* had declined yet another legislative attempt to curtail them.

And while the senior professors

by law must work a minimum 12 hours a week on the campus, at the other end of the academic scale the researchers (encompassing lecturers, their assistants and contracted teachers) will be forced by the same law to work a minimum 36-hour week for an annual remuneration of £2,000 rising to a maximum £4,500 at the end of a 14-year term.

"Just as before the bulk of the campus work will fall on the backs of junior staff. Nothing has changed," a senior lecturer commented.

Little remains of the original law. Junior staff are expected to maintain their recently granted right of tenure and the promotions of senior and assistant professors are to be awarded by a state board of examiners. This "would deprive faculty heads of their traditional power to make appointments."

Still these last innovations may well be watered down in the modifications envisaged before the law obtains final approval. For in true Italian tradition most changes only exist on paper and then only until a minister of state talks them to death—particularly at university level.

Islam to be taught by order of General Zia

from Hasan Akhtar

ISLAMABAD
The Universities Commission has directed all Pakistani universities to introduce Islamic and Urdu studies as a compulsory subject in postgraduate and graduate classes.

Punjab University's vice-chancellor said that the additional subject would be introduced in the Punjab from the next academic year. It was made clear that the new subject would be taught to both science and humanities students in postgraduate and graduate classes. New courses in Islamic and Pakistan studies for those

classes are being drawn up. The compulsory subject is being introduced by order of General Zia ul-Haq, Pakistan president and chief of army, who wants to turn Pakistan into, in his own words, a truly Islamic state.

Meanwhile Mr James P. Grant, the director of Unicef, who is visiting Pakistan, called on non-industrialized countries to devote more resources to conducting research on poverty-related problems of health. He said the lens of health-related problems advanced nations spent only 5 per cent of their medical research money on health problems of the

poor while 95 per cent went into research on health problems of the rich.

He said it would be unrealistic to expect the rich nations to divert their funds on research for other people's problems. It was there, he said, that the poor nations to persuade their scientists and doctors to devote their time, energy and resources for research on the problems related to health of their own people.

He said of the 15 million children who died last year throughout the world 13 million died of malnutrition in less affluent societies.

Ernest Gellner examines the dilemmas facing today's intellectuals

Breaking through the bars of the rubber cage

There is a celebrated summing up of world history by Hegel which runs: at first, only one was free; later, some were free; and finally, all were free. Whether indeed world history is either as neat or as secure and satisfactory, may well be doubted. But there is a similar generalization which is just as important and much more reliable. Once, none could read; later, and for a very long time, some could read; and finally, all could read. Literacy, unlike liberty, really is irreversible. Short of some total cataclysm, societies do not lose the capacity to write, whereas they lose their freedom much more easily and frequently.

But this three-stage scheme of the history of mankind in terms of literacy also gives us an overall history of the role of intellectuals. When none could read, the only or nearest equivalent of the thinkers was the ritual specialist. Only ritual could endow assertions with solemnity, permanence, seriousness, and free them from the ephemeral, opportunistic quality of ordinary speech. But the discovery of writing opened up new tremendous possibilities which indeed did not remain unexploited: the option of Platonism or scripturalism; the reflection and solemnisation or apotheosis of the Word, not through the heightened sensitivity and excitement engendered by ritual, but by inscription and by reverence for the written word; the writing-engendered faith in the independent existence of objects of thought. The great moment in the history of mankind occurred not when the Word became flesh, but when the Word ceased to be flesh, and became disembodied and freed from the speaker. The scribes then partially replaced the shamans, and the tendency towards iconoclasm, and sobriety and foreswearing of craven images and ritual excess, or even of any ritual itself, can be seen as the never fully resolved rivalry of scriber and shaman.

Intellectuals in the age of the scribes were generally conservative. This was partly due to the fact that their best chances of employment lay in the provision of secretarial services either to a centralized state or a religious hierarchy, and they were unlikely to bite the hand that fed them and turn against their patrons; but also to the inherently conservative fact they had to offer for writing fixes or freezes things in his work on the social implications of literacy. Jack Goody tends to comment on its impact on communication and on the internal organization of thought but the really important consequence of writing seems to me to be its potential for the externalization, the disembodiment of thought.

Through acquiring an idea or a thought, acquiring an independent existence, detached from any speaker or thinker, no longer amenable to change and manipulation and corruption, the intellectual acquires the authority of context or personality, and can thus acquire a purer, less opportunistic and less materialistic opportunity of its own. Mankind could now say: God has put it in writing. The fixation of ideas in writing may be a necessary condition of genuine cognitive growth, but without it, all advances are liable to be lost, swamped, submerged. Writing may do for ideas what Mendel's genetic mechanism does for successful mutations: it preserves them from being rapidly submerged. But while writing may be in this way necessary, it is certainly not sufficient for intellectual progress.

Both the inherent potential of clerical skills and the natural interests of the clerical class, push literacy in the direction of conservatism and stabilization rather than innovation.

This may sound odd in our age, when intellectuals tend, on the whole, to have a bullish image. The suggestion that eggheads are naturally conservative sounds paradoxical. But I suspect this is only so because we no longer live in the age of clerks, when some could read, when all were very close to the point of transition to the age of universal literacy. Some countries have passed it, some are only approaching it, but there is none which is far removed from it one way or the other. The implications of this transition are tremendous and far from properly understood. Universal literacy or the widespread and serious aspiration towards it, in marked contrast to the merely nominal aspirations of our age, such as widespread political participation or accountable government, is of course not an accidental or arbitrary phenomenon. It is not merely the fruit of the pious wish of educationists to raise the cultural tone of their clientele. It is itself the consequence of a new style of industrial division of labour, in which brain-work is replaced by specialized and instruction-sensitive, hence literacy-presupposing skills.

One consequence of diffused and so to speak essential literacy—literacy as a precondition of full humanity, of effective moral citizenship—is nationalism. The deeply rooted drive towards universal literacy is by far the most important single factor in the explanation of nationalism. The requirement is that state and culture converge, that rulers be of the same cultural unit, that rulers be of the same cultural unit, that rulers be of the same cultural unit.

And moreover, that each culture should possess its own political roof—is the consequence of a situation in which it is only primary schools (and not families, clans, master craftsmen or other institutions), which are productively vitalized. Primary schools are parts of educational systems run by states, and operate in some one linguistic cultural medium, so that those unable or unwilling to use it, thereby become excluded from the social and political life. No Orich or Miss Blandish observed that every girl should have a husband, preferably her own. Nowadays every culture wants a state, and preferably its own.

But that, important and fundamental though it is, is only one of the implications of the same/all transition in the history of mankind's involvement with the written word. Another one is the decline of scripturalism. Gresham's Law applies to the written and printed word as it does to much else. The tremendous inflationary expansion of the written word causes its value to slump, and makes it impossible to reverse it, as once it was, when skill scarce and jealously protected. But this devaluation is not alone in producing this effect: a number of factors jointly conspire in this direction.

The phenomenon in question may be called the Rubber Cage, by reference to the celebrated Weberian thesis of the Iron Cage. The Weberian argument ran as follows: the precondition of the type of economy to which we have become accustomed and the fruits of which we have become accustomed is a certain kind of "rationality" of thought, of conduct, and of organization. Orderliness and predictability are required. Like Marx, Weber believed that the effectiveness of means must be without fear or favour, and indeed without sentiment or much sensibility, in the light of ruthless and clear criteria of efficiency. This turns out to be

the dreadful price which the modern Faust is paying for having all his desires satisfied: he loses his soul, feeling, magic, idiosyncrasy, thoughtfulness, all evaporate in his acceptance. He might have added that even "rationality" itself is in the end only required rather selectively in the modern world.

What seems to have happened is this. The organization of industrial production still requires in the last analysis cold rational orderliness of thought. But consumption, and even what might be called the intermediate manipulation along the productive assembly line, does not. Subordinate work and much of leisure and consumption activity consists of serving and using a lot of machines, whose controls become progressively simpler, more self-evident and acquire an apparent intuitive obviousness. They are designed with this end in view. The proportion of leisure time to work time also goes up. And the amount of time spent in an industrial environment consisting of "user-friendly", intuitively obvious machines (or rather, machine-like increases in the control of time spent in work simultaneously arduous and requiring inner moral and conceptual discipline).

The subjective and permissive ideologies which flourished in the 1920s and which are still widely reflected in: they generally assumed that cognitively and morally the world was as easy nut to crack just as a modern motor car is easy to drive. Ardourness and selective, precocious salvation was not envisaged, easy spontaneity was assumed to be adequate, and if it was not, some evil black magic ("alienation") was at work.

In the rather more scary, less comfortable atmosphere of the world since the 1930s, these trends have become more muted. Perhaps they were simply characteristic of that one transient period and we shall never see them return in full force again. But I doubt it. I do not think they are in any kind of contradiction with the industrial cornucopia to which we are all collectively hooked, could only be engendered by a style of thought, conduct and organization which was sober and rule-bound, which emerged from the spirit of the scribes (and incidentally, which was born in those subcommunities in which nearly everyone was his own scribe, which in effect anticipated universal literacy).

Once the industrial-scientific world was firmly established, there was no further need for the pervasiveness of the "rational" spirit, in Weber's sense. Weber himself noted that once that spirit was

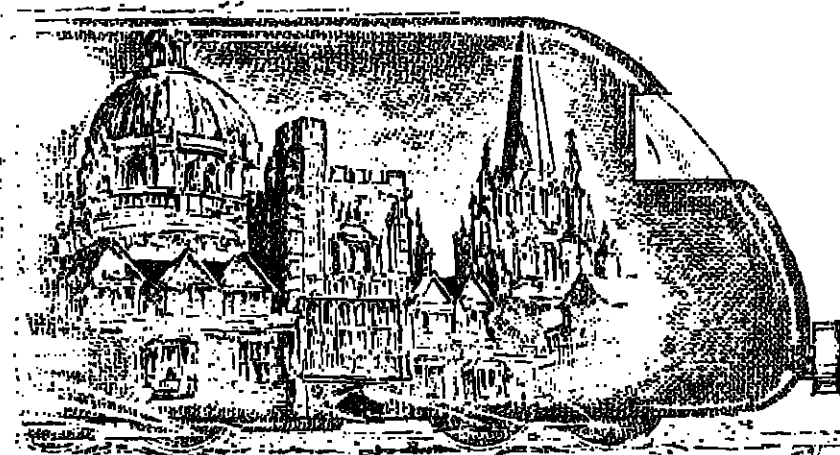
established and visibly prospered it no longer needed to be sustained by the Calvinism which had, according to his famous theory, presided over its inception. He might have added that even "rationality" itself is in the end only required rather selectively in the modern world.

Now the whole charge of Treason of the Clerics is a strange one, even since Julian Benda first articulated it. The phrase and the charge are frequently echoed. Treason is what other clerks do. The question is do we have any honest way of not committing it, or indeed any way of identifying treason and loyalty, in this context?

The background metaphysics in terms of which Julian Benda's book was articulated was profoundly Platonic or, if you like, scripturalist; it belonged to the age when stable, eternal values were in the keeping of the clerics. But Benda did not argue this vision, the merely mythical voice of a past that had been systematically betrayed by modern European intellectuals. So it was, And why was this betrayal a bad thing? Well, he insisted, look at the terrible consequence it has...

The profound irony is that Benda commits the treason of the clerics in the very act of denouncing it. The underlying logic of his argument is pragmatic, and not an appeal to truth as such at all... The merit of the Platonic scribble myth is not argued, but tacitly inferred from its alleged social value... Now contrast Benda's conduct with paradigmatic, self-confessed, open traitor to the Scribes' vision—Friedrich Nietzsche. What he preached is that our real

continued next page



UGC



Is the UGC's buffer principle at risk?

Thomas A. Owen examines the role of the University Grants Committee as it enters its seventh decade

Whenever Government actions affect the universities, the part played by the University Grants Committee, if any, is carefully reviewed. The UGC arrangement is traditionally supposed to provide a buffer, interposing between the Government and the universities an independent body whose membership is mainly academic.

Events in 1979, when the UGC celebrated the diamond jubilee of its establishment, have raised some serious questions about the buffer principle. Government policy on overseas fees, discussions of long-term planning into the 1990s for higher education, are only two examples of areas in which Government seems to be directing events. Is the buffer principle at risk?

This article considers the question and concludes that the UGC arrangements still offer the universities the protection of an effective buffer. Throughout, it has been assumed that the binary system persists. Since the UGC's terms of reference are central to this discussion, these are set out here. In July, 1946, these new terms of reference were given to the committee:

● To inquire into the financial needs of university education in Great Britain; to advise the Government as to the application of any grants made by Parliament towards meeting them (so far these exactly reproduce the 1919 terms of reference but substituting Great Britain for United Kingdom);

● To collect, examine and make available information on matters relating to university education at home and abroad, in little known addition made in 1919, modified in 1932, on the recommendation of the Select Committee on Estimates, to restrict the clause to Great Britain);

● To assist, in consultation with the universities and other bodies concerned, the preparation and execution of such plans for the development of the universities as may from time to time be required in order that they are fully adequate to national needs. In including into the financial needs of university education in Great Britain, the UGC is still interposed between the Government and universities. The application of cash limits does not render this exercise wholly nugatory. The interruption of the quinquennial planning cycle has deprived universities of the opportunity to present their needs formally to the UGC at regular intervals. The October 15, 1979, request for plans for the period up to 1983-84 at least restored this opportunity.

course right outside the scope of the committee's responsibility, have made it necessary to depart from the committee's recommendations. This in no way alters the Government's confidence in the committee's judgment in the whole field of university matters on which they are responsible for giving advice. In the discussion, including a debate on university grants and salaries, which followed during ensuing months, these principles were repeatedly stated by Government spokesmen:

a) It must be for the Government, and the Government alone, in the light of all competing claims, to decide how much can be provided globally for university education. (Mr Brooke stated clearly that this was not a new policy: "It has never been understood that whatever the UGC asked for should automatically be made available by the Government.")

b) The practice of all governments has been to disclose the confidential advice of the University Grants Committee.

On this Sir Edward Boyle, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, made an important statement during a debate on science and industry, on July 12, 1962:

The maximum we now are permitted to know, therefore, is the bare fact that the UGC and the Government have agreed to differ. It is tempting to suggest that the universities might now wish to question the UGC's role. The gain, however, of justifying a break with a valuable feature of the buffer—confidence, which at least closes the door to further public discussion and interference in this delicate area, is to advise the Government to the application of any grants made by Parliament. In exercising this function the UGC is an effective buffer. The Government has never varied the UGC's allocation between universities in fact. The sole recorded instance of a change of the recommended distribution pre-dates the UGC, as it was in 1906 that the Chancellor of the Exchequer varied the allocation recommended by the Advisory Committee on Grants to Universities.

ment always takes the UGC's advice on allocation of the grant. Mr Henry Brooke refused, for example, to reply to questions about the grant to the University of Keele. On the distribution of grants, these points can be made:

a) From the beginning, the UGC's reports have indicated that the Government did lay down guidelines, and was unlikely to do so. Austen Chamberlain, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, wrote on July 16, 1920 to Sir William McCormick, first chairman of the UGC, and noted for example:

"It would be clearly improper for the Government to subsidize activities on the part of the Universities which may be unwarranted in the national interest."

The UGC report of 1930, after noting an increase by £250,000 to £1,800,000 in the grant, referred to the "close but friendly examination to which our recommendations were subjected."

In post-war years, the change in the UGC's terms of reference clearly brought in to the distribution the question of national needs, and this is further discussed later. Government guidelines are not, however, new and are not incompatible with the UGC's buffer status, provided only that the guidelines are general.

b) If the Government's influence on the distribution of grant should be minimized, to preserve the buffer principle, does it follow that the UGC can continue not to account to the universities?

We are facing a period of level funding, in which total recurrent grant will be held for a number of years at no higher level in real terms than that for 1973-80. British universities will probably fail to attract overseas students in the numbers required, at new fee levels, to maintain their income in real terms. If that loss is made worse by a differential distribution of the Government's "level funding", the burden of commitments may become too heavy for some university institutions and their bankers. In such dire circumstances, could the universities continue to accept that the UGC, having made its judgment, does not disclose its arithmetic?

The third function is to collect, examine and make available information on matters relating to university education in the United Kingdom. This function does not raise any question of principle in itself. The method of collecting statistical information, in the Universities Statistical Record, has now become so sophisticated that government can readily obtain the information which it needs for planning.

There can be little objection to the prompt and organized supply of such information. The immediate pressures on the UGC may, however, inhibit the flow of information in a different form. The UGC has commissioned notable reports on matters of university concern, by setting up special committees. True, the last reports, by the Atkinson Working Party on "Capital Provision for University Libraries and the Atkinson report on Russian Studies, made recommendations which have not been universally welcomed.

It is, however, an important part of the UGC's function as a buffer to continue to produce reports on matters relating to university education. Unless government and the universities have such reports, large issues will be inadequately mentioned and discussed in public. When the pressures of the current crisis abate, it is in the interests of universities that the UGC should continue to be willing to consider in detail any major topic requiring study.

Finally, how does the UGC stand as a buffer in relation to "the preparation and execution of such plans for the development of the universities as may from time to time be required in order that they are fully adequate to national needs?"

This significant addition made in 1946 was prompted by the Report of the Barlow committee on scientific manpower, which noted that "the State has perhaps been over-concerned lest there should be even a suggestion of interference with the independence of the universities and, from the terms of reference, it is clear that the UGC was originally intended to be a somewhat passive body whose main function was to criticize proposals put forward by the universities and which was not itself expected to make any attempt to suggest possible development."

In 1977-78, the last year for which we have statistics, the expenditure for administration ranged from £109 to £358. Universities which built up reserves may now suspect that their grant is thereby reduced, to help those who are already over-spent. Despite these questions, I am convinced that a student body for administration ranging from £109 to £358. Universities which built up reserves may now suspect that their grant is thereby reduced, to help those who are already over-spent. Despite these questions, I am convinced that a student body for administration ranging from £109 to £358.

There is no doubt that the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals would have wished, in the words of a July 1946 statement, "to play their own part in the

cooperative planning of the whole university system. It falls to the committee, to devise methods of working together, to ensure fullment of their common task." The UGC it was that did the planning, and the universities accepted with good grace increased dirigisme from the UGC. In 1980 is the planning responsibility of the UGC at risk? These points can be made:

(a) There is a partial return to the concept of "national needs" which was current in 1946, viz the national manpower needs.

It is often forgotten that the 1946 change in the UGC terms of reference took place in the context of a flow of reports on the supply of doctors, dentists, veterinary scientists, scientific personnel, technologists and others. These covered a high proportion of total university activity in 1946. The intention was clearly to reflect social manpower needs in UGC planning. The public emphasis on manpower planning declined after the Robbins report for two reasons.

First, the planning proved ineffective, targets turning out to be either too low or too high, often such a manager and control as to have declined. Secondly, the universities' expansion greatly increased the proportion of the universities' effort in areas where national manpower needs were not specific. The Robbins report had indeed rejected an assessment of "the supply of different kinds of highly educated person... required to meet the needs of the nation as a basis for planning."

Instead, the "Robbins principle" was that "all young persons qualified by ability and attainment to pursue a full-time course in higher education should have the opportunity to do so."

Recent-Government thinking indicates that national manpower needs will be stressed, though not in the detail which created problems in the 1950s. To the influences the UGC must pursue, for example, a desirable science/humanities ratio, or a number of students to be trained at the postgraduate level in a method of research or as teachers, there is no break with the buffer principle, since the UGC will need to keep a full eye on any evidence that the Government is becoming more specific in defining national needs.

(b) The initiative in planning the universities' place within the higher education system was definitely in the Government, and to the DES in particular. Student numbers, and to some extent their global distribution (science/humanities; undergraduate/postgraduate; home/overseas) are now firmly matters for the Government.

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BOOKS

The universal experience of loss

Loss: sadness and depression
Attachment and Loss, Volume 3
by John Bowlby
Hogarth Press, £12.00
ISBN 0 7012 0350 1

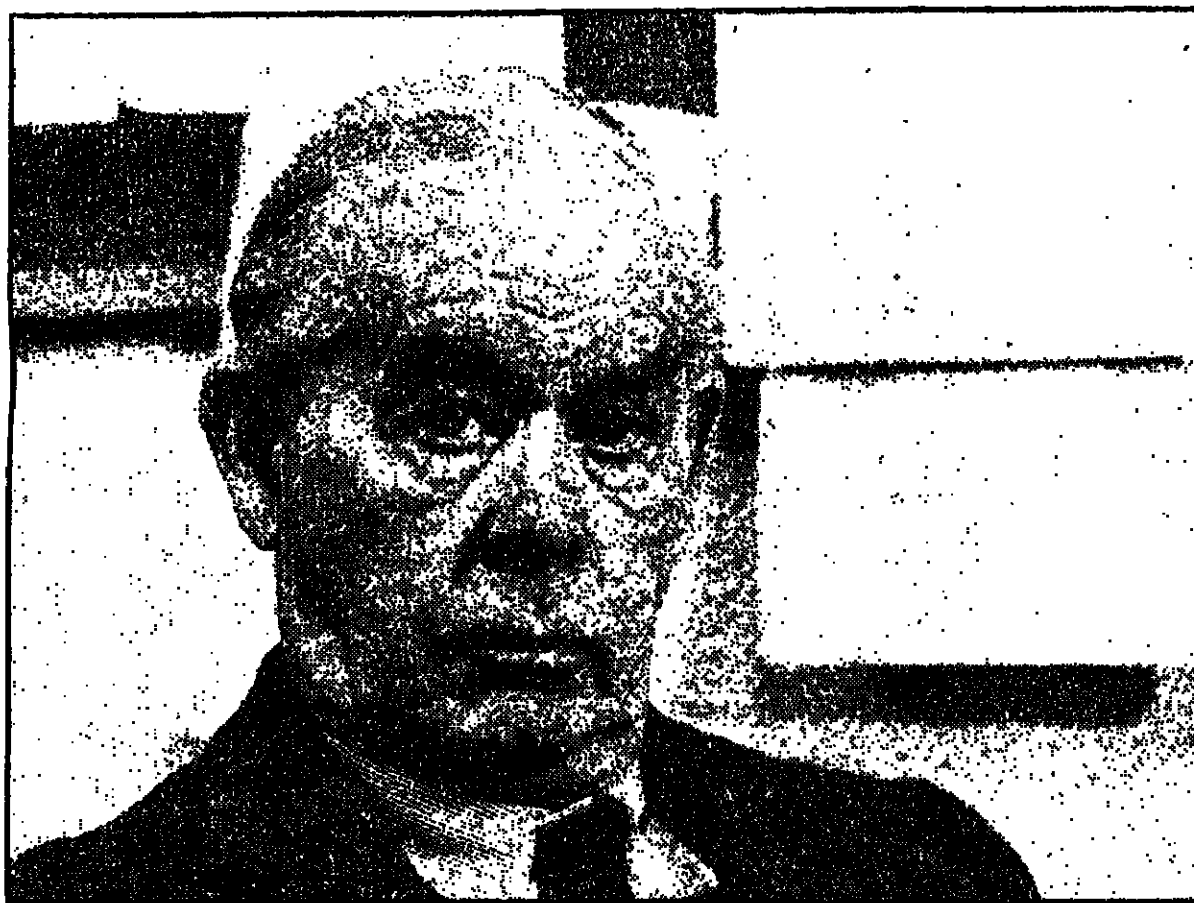
by Ann Oakley

That childhood experience should influence adult behaviour seems a matter of common sense. It is, after all, a central precept of modern educational thinking that children are malleable beings, people in the making, to be moulded this way or that in accordance with the deliberate intentions of their parents and other educators, and in line with their somewhat less deliberately chosen social, economic, geographical and family position. Yet the notion that early experience determines adult personality is more than common sense: it is a theory, the jealously guarded property of certain professional groups. Because it is a theory—only one among many—it is important to acknowledge that it is, too, ultimately ideology: the wilyly understandable, but nevertheless dubiously mental product of concrete material circumstances.

It is extremely difficult to write about John Bowlby's work from a vantage point outside the circles in which it is directly relevant. This is because he has at least two contradictory reputations. On the one hand, to many of those outside the psychoanalytic field he is the arch-orthodox propagandist of the view that the mental health of children can only be ensured through the constant vigilance of women as mothers. On the other hand, to Bowlby's professional peers his work has often been seen as over-flowing the boundaries of orthodoxy. The two conflicting images were evident early on in Bowlby's career when the World Health Organization asked him in 1948 to prepare a report on the psychological effects of separating young children from their homes. The result, *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, met with a defensive flurry: most paediatricians and psychiatric clinicians could not accept the idea that young children were unhappy when removed from familiar circumstances and caretakers. The publication two years later of the popular version of the report, *Child Care and the Growth of Love*, was iconoclastic in another way. It appeared to suggest that the emancipation of women from child-rearing was a lifetime of continual grief. (What this book, or any other of Bowlby's writings, in fact said on the subject of the necessity of the mother-child bond is in a sense not relevant, just as the professional scepticism of his earlier work evoked is not entirely Bowlby's responsibility. Personal reputations are built on the basis of selective perception not scientific fairness.)

The volume on *Loss: sadness and depression* is the last part of a trilogy, which also includes *Attachment and Loss* on which Bowlby has been working since 1956 and in which he develops a number of ideas stated in his published papers. Volume 1, *Attachment*, published in 1969, set the mother-child bond in the general framework of a theory of attachment behaviour. Bowlby contended that children's formation of attachments to adults is a type of instinctive behaviour whose basic function is that of protecting the dependent young from predators, thus securing species survival. In particular, Bowlby doubted that the infant's attachment to her or his mother was a consequence of learning that food and other forms of physical satisfaction are provided by the mother. He saw it as a primary drive.

Volume 2, *Separation: anxiety and grief*, published in 1973, developed more fully other already stated themes of Bowlby's approach to do with the symptoms displayed by children separated from those to whom they have become attached, and the correct interpretation of these symptoms. The present volume considers what happens when separation becomes loss and the child's attachment to an adult caretaker is temporarily or permanently severed. Some key questions



John Bowlby, who wrote in 1953, "I must confess to a rather one-track, one-problem mind".

with which Bowlby is concerned here are: Do young children mourn? How does adult grief compare with childhood grief? What is "normal" and what "pathological" mourning? What kinds of experiences in childhood characterize those adults who find it difficult to adjust to the loss of a loved person? Bowlby's thesis, simply stated, is that children as young as 16 months are capable of mourning the loss of a mother-figure; that the nature of such response is partly determined by the circumstances in which the loss occurs; and that the experience of loss in childhood "is especially apt to evoke psychological processes of a kind that are as crucial for psychopathology as inflammation and the resulting scar tissue are for physiology." Such wounds, Bowlby holds, explain a large part of the violence observed in the mourning of bereaved adults—from what is "normal" on the one hand, to what is "pathological" on the other. Although with childhood losses, factors such as the identity and role of the person lost, the cause of the loss and the sex of the bereaved individual affect the mourning process, it is the personality of the bereaved, especially the way his (sic) attachment behaviour is organized, which carries the heaviest weight. In this sense none of us is ultimately responsible for the depressions into which we are plunged by the ordinary misfortunes of life, though the message clearly is that we can help our children to greater resilience by protecting their emergent personalities from the psychological scarring both of loss and, more importantly, of its unappreciated and unworked-out consequences.

The trouble with this book is that, stripped of its psychiatric jargon, much of its grand theory turns out to be the common sense which I mentioned earlier; and that which does not seems to me to make very little sense at all. For example, the notion, hotly disputed by Bowlby, that children cannot mourn is clearly a piece of polemic introduced within a cultural psychology of childhood which regards children as a separate class of beings. The perceptions and reactions of children and adults are not automatically different, but those of children are bound to express the lack of control children in industrial civilization have over their emotional and economic circumstances. Moreover, the mental lives of children are interpreted by adults, and the risk is that they will be interpreted in such a manner that their subjective meaning is almost impenetrable.

The behaviour of young children in hospital is admirably defended by John Bowlby and his colleagues in the early 1960s. It is a case in point. While hospital staff tended to regard the passivity that followed the initial process of separation from home and family as a sign of the child's "adjustment" to hospital (and one which not incidentally made medical and nursing care easier), it is presumptuous and unkind for the child's behaviour from the child's point of view for this clinically convenient state of passivity to be seen as an expression of despair: the arrival of the suspicion and the grief that what has been quite a useful state of mind is being regained. In the same way, the Victorian tradition of not telling children the truth, for instance about the death of a parent, leads to the same problems as adults encounter when they find themselves the victims of deliberate deception. It is presumptuous and unkind for one person to judge that he or she knows better than another person the limits of that person's understanding and motivation to understand.

Another reviewer has noted, for the most part, that this final volume of John Bowlby's grand trilogy contains very little that is original. Most of it has been said by him before. Some of it has been said by other psychoanalysts or psychiatrists. The fact that Bowlby speaks in a way that is accessible to a reader and couches his theories in technical language irritates rather than impresses, and it has to be said that in many ways this book is badly written, badly organized, repetitive and, on Bowlby's own admission, "overlong." The case histories ("Julia, an educated black secretary," "Yisha, ten when father died," etc.) are too numerous and weighty. The temptation is to read them and not the text and then to wonder what generalizations can possibly be drawn from such unrepresentative cases.

Another difficulty I have with *Loss: sadness and depression* relates to the claims Bowlby makes for the "scientific" status of his work. These claims are an integral part of the approach offered in the book, and are entirely novel way of understanding loss and its psychological aftermath, and for this reason they deserve more attention than I am able to give them here. But the key points seem to me to be three. First, Bowlby says he wants to put psychoanalysis on a scientific basis. His first allegiance is to psychoanalysis, but the development of his work raised doubts in his mind about its "metaphysical superstructure." Basically, these doubts concerned the central role of the psychoanalytic orthodoxy of abstract concepts such as "psychic energy

and drive, and the validity that can be attached to the reminiscences of psychologically troubled persons. While such doubts seem to be eminently reasonable, what they provoke is the further thought that psychoanalysis is not, and cannot be, scientific in any accepted meaning of that term. The language of psychoanalysis is the language of causality. But its methods are unable to deal satisfactorily with any causal argument, since they cannot establish the three essential properties of causal analysis—absence of concomitant variation in "causal" and dependent variables, the temporal precedence of the former over the latter and proof that the relationship between them is not spurious. Moreover, whereas all science is culture-bound, psychoanalysis professes virtually no interest in any culture other than that which generated it. There is no way of judging whether psychoanalytic concepts applied to the mental and social life of other cultures (as, for instance, in the out-of-fashion psychoanalytic anthropology) make any sense. What do they explain, and to whom does the explanation make sense?

The second point relates to the first and concerns the means used by Bowlby to achieve a scientific standing for psychoanalysis. He draws on ethology, control theory, and recent work in cognitive psychology and human information processing to produce what he contends is a new "paradigm." The particular value of the "paradigm" is that "whilst its concepts are psychological and well suited to the clinical data of interest to psychoanalysts, they are compatible with those of neurophysiology and developmental psychology, and also that they are capable of meeting the ordinary requirements of a scientific discipline" (page 38). At this point a footnote refers the reader to the earlier volume *Attachment* (and also to the work of another psychoanalyst, Emanuel Peterfreund), in *Attachment*, eight chapters develop Bowlby's contention that the idea of instinctive behaviour in man (sic) can be rooted in something real, namely in common properties of the relationship between animals and their environment. A goose can court a dog-kennel and mourn when it is overturned. Ethological data and concepts are "concerned with phenomena at least comparable to those we as analysts try to understand in man" (Volume 1, page 7).

Are they? I cannot help feeling that if psychoanalysts can only be defended by an explanation of the instinctive behaviour of geese, it is time to look elsewhere for relevant and productive theories. I can more easily be satisfied that Bowlby's proved the superiority of abstract and control systems theory in explaining attachment, separation and behaviour in humans, than that he has shown these to be "scientifically" correct interpretations of underlying psychological processes. Thirdly, and still on this theme, the single-mindedness with which Bowlby has pursued certain ideas over a lifetime's work is impressive—but it must also lay him open to attack. *Loss: sadness and depression* is the culmination of a vision enjoyed by its author in the late 1930s and recounted by him in 1953 in the following terms: "I became convinced in my own heart that certain events of early childhood were of critical importance in determining personality development, particularly the child's relationship to his mother and the mother's unconscious attitude to the child. . . . I wanted to make scientific those observations on mother-child relationships. . . . I must confess to a rather one-track, one-problem mind" (*Discussions on Child Development*, Volume II). As Bowlby says in the present work, his thoughts have moved on from that point: he is more cautious about the attribution of all children's difficulties to mothers specifically, and he is more impressed by the influence of individual social and personal circumstances on psychological health and ill-health than he was to be. Nevertheless, the fact that he altered that he has sought to develop a science that will prove a judgement on him in so doing he is considered hardly at all those impositions which fall beyond the boundaries of his own belief.

This is a negative observation, and I do not want to be too negative. John Bowlby has been, and remains, a tremendous advocate of the rights of children and he has more respect for the contribution of so-called "social science" to the debate than many of his colleagues. The book contains, for example, a most respectful and pertinent account of the work presented by George Brown and Tirril Harris in *Social Origins of Depression*, which is one of the few solid pieces of evidence we have for an association between childhood loss and adult depression. For it has to be said that there is a lot of depression around and a dearth of evidence to support it. It is logical, therefore, to wonder about the value of advice about how both children and adults may be helped to survive and even flourish. It seems that the way we fully learn from a powerful protest of a child is unwillingly separated from her or his caretaker is the age-old, uncomfortable feeling of loss: the loss of person: if children are to prosper, this book would be a good child who asks "How did Mummy breathe and who will feed her?" is pleading in a remarkably adult fashion for truth and continued connexion.

I wish, however, that Bowlby would take the point of his own remark that "contingencies of life are often to the spirit of science" and not draw such sharp barriers between the normal and the pathological as he does. One might say that some people have a "normal" depressive mood, and some widows experience "normal" and others "pathological" mourning, and that people come to be labelled the perpetrators of their own discontent. In the context of the whole of Bowlby's work, it is a comment on the kind of society which generates a victim who is not a child, but a thoughtless denigrator of the humanity of a woman, and who threatens the possibility of human happiness. Nor is it a comment on the long history of the province of the realms of anxiety human experience.

All his scholarship would, however, have been in vain without the ability to express complicated concepts clearly. He helps the uninitiated by prefacing each chapter with a short summary, and points out, in a way that even he skipped entirely if, despite the diagrams, they prove too technical. Not an easy matter, addressing several audiences, but an endeavour which Freeman, as publisher of the Scientific American, have made peculiarly their own.

The reason for the seeming prominence of the book today is that it is a comment on what Ernest Gruenberg has called "the failures of our successes." As contagious epidemics have receded most people in the Western world can now expect to live to a ripe, or possibly over-ripe, old age. Most cancers undoubtedly take years to develop. But it would be quite wrong to regard malignancy as an inevitable concomitant of ageing, or of predominantly different types which epidemiological studies have uncovered in settled societies in various parts of the world, together with the evidence from immigrants, has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that environmental factors must play a highly significant part in cancer aetiology.

This is perhaps clearest in regard to the association between certain skin cancers and excessive sunbathing, but by light-skinned races, but very high incidence of liver cancer amongst sub-Saharan Africans, and oesophageal cancer in parts of Iran are every bit as obvious, but still mysterious. Indeed, it is in very few cases, notably in relation to lung cancer and cigarette smoking, that a specific environmental agent has been indicated. "In retrospect," Cairns remarks wryly, "it is almost as if Western societies had set out to conduct a vast and fairly well controlled experiment about several million deaths and using their own people as experimental animals".

Prevention, so popular today, is the main desperately hampered by the various critiques is that these institutions are efforts to maximize only one social good at the expense of others. His own explicit position in this respect is interesting, pluralistic and in the end utopian. He understands the conflict between existing political ideologies as presenting different choices among four competing social goals, each good in itself, but hard to reconcile with each other: equity, efficiency in the creation of wealth, personal freedom, and stability. Although he regards stability as the most basic goal, always desired and never achieved for any length of time, his obvious absence from all current regimes leads him to specify how political systems have chosen among the remaining three: freedom and efficiency at the expense of equity equals laissez-faire capitalism; equity and efficiency equals communism; equity and personal freedom equals "soft" socialism.

He ends this discussion by stating his "personal view that mankind can and must try to discover a recipe for combining all four (page 63), but remains eloquently silent on how this could be done. I say. This prejudice underlies his diagnosis of the world situation and his imaginative scenarios, even though he describes in earlier parts of the book his earlier approach as objective and scientific. Ayres is particularly good as a trenchant critic of major and of relatively minor aspects of the current climate of thought as expressed in explicit attitudes to the future or implicitly in the functioning of social institutions. An example of the former is the technique of technological optimism as well as pessimism; of the latter his attack on the medical, legal and advertising professions in the States as being self-serving only. Given the underlying prejudice it is not surprising that the book's health service does not fare much better. The crux of his argument in these

Uncertain Futures: challenges for decision makers
by R. U. Ayres
Wiley £13.00
ISBN 0 471 04250 1

The author, a professor of engineering and public policy in the United States (a type of professorship unfortunately unknown in his native Britain), has once again made a valuable contribution to the debate about the future. This well written and well informed book centres on the American situation but ranges widely over the whole globe with its economic, technological, demographic and above all social and political problems and the associated questions of human values and prejudices. This vast range is held together by the author's own implied, never professed prejudice: a nostalgic belief in the superiority of a free market economy which—given its non-existence in the modern world (has it ever existed?)—leads him to a pessimistic view of the future, particularly with regard to the possibility of a democratic regime could be done. I say. This prejudice underlies his diagnosis of the world situation and his imaginative scenarios, even though he describes in earlier parts of the book his earlier approach as objective and scientific.

The rest of the book—the major part—is free from any sign of utopian optimism. An analysis of demographic and economic trends shows how unequally wealth is distributed both in rich and poor countries; Ayres sharply attacks the levels of public expenditure, including the military budget in the super-powers, and claims—without evidence—that most welfare expenditure is wasted. There follows a discussion of consumption patterns, including food, energy, non-fuel materials, transport,

communications, and health and educational services. Among much interesting material there are, of course, statements with which one could quarrel, but in a short review Ayres's pessimism about the rich democracies is here matched by despair about the possibility of poor countries, particularly India, to solve their food problem, not so much because of absolute shortages, but because of deeply engrained traditions and prejudices. Perhaps the most valuable part—at least for the non-technologist—is the discussion of the rule of technology in general and the clear and lucid description of specific technological proposals, their assets and liabilities. I cannot judge the adequacy of Ayres's arguments in this respect, only acknowledge the persuasive competence of his presentation.

The book ends with three possible scenarios of major crises which could all occur within the next decade, even though they may now not seem probable: a world energy crisis, a world food crisis, and a scenario of United States withdrawal into isolationism, uncontrolled nuclear proliferation throughout the world, and a political and economic crisis in the communist countries. Imaginary dated press releases and presidential statements make these catastrophic possibilities appear all too real. Each of them provokes belated government intervention, but the nature of the intervention with the economy and the population's life style. In view of this Ayres's last words that there is still hope, but not much, sound as if he had not even convinced himself, let alone a reader who shares his underlying pessimism. Altogether, however, a stimulating book, that should be widely read, debated and criticized.

Marie Jahoda

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The future in debate

Journey into prehistory

People of the Lake: man, his origins, nature and future
by Richard Leakey and Roger Lewin
Collins, £6.50
ISBN 0 00 219502 X

Centred around Richard Leakey's excavations at the rich and informative fossil man site of Koobi Fora on the eastern shore of Lake Turkana in northern Kenya, this book provides a journey into the early stages of human prehistory. The reader should not expect, however, a detailed account of the fossil finds which document our early history. The authors have drawn not only on palaeontology and archaeology but also on the broader areas of anthropology, primate behaviour, genetics and linguistics, among others, to reconstruct the series of evolutionary events which ultimately resulted in the unique complex of biological and behavioural features which we recognize in ourselves as human beings. We are often considered to be unique among other animals, in our way of walking, our large brain size in relation to body size, our linguistic ability and our reliance on tools and culture. However, Leakey and Lewin argue that the interference of a dictatorial nature with the economy and the population's life style. In view of this Ayres's last words that there is still hope, but not much, sound as if he had not even convinced himself, let alone a reader who shares his underlying pessimism.

Altogether, however, a stimulating book, that should be widely read, debated and criticized.

Marie Jahoda

Marie Jahoda is a Consultant at the Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex.

modern human beings are the only mammals which share not only origins, nature and future. Leakey and Lewin emphasize the importance of this form of economic dependence in strengthening the social ties necessary for the successful rearing of slow maturing offspring, in the origin of economic division of labour (often manifest along sexual lines) and in the development of large brain size and language. In addition, they pursue interesting lines of reasoning which tie the original development of tools to plant gathering rather than to hunting or defence and which place the roots of human aggressive tendencies and accumulation of material possessions in an agriculturally based economy and not in the evolutionary earlier gathering and hunting economy.

In order to explain the evolution of this unique form of economic cooperation, the authors draw on the controversial field of sociobiology and the principle of reciprocal altruism. Reciprocal altruism, here in the form of food sharing behaviour, is assumed to promote genetic and therefore evolutionary success. This is not, however, an explanation in itself. Perhaps the main weakness of this book is that the authors fail to approach the crucial question of why this form of reciprocal altruism developed in the human lineage and in no other.

Although *People of the Lake* cannot be expected to provide definitive answers to all of the questions involved in the interpretation of the course of human evolution, it is an engaging and thought-provoking introduction to the lines of reasoning which are currently applied to the interpretation of our own evolutionary history.

Leslie C. Aiello

Leslie C. Aiello is lecturer in anthropology at University College, London.

Intractable nature of cancer

Cancer, Science and Society
by John Cairns
Freeman, £8.50 and £4.20
ISBN 0 71 670 0980 and 0972

Accustomed to trust in the ultimate omnipotence of science we are affronted as well as frightened by the intractable nature of cancer, and our deep dread of this ancient scourge is matched only by our desperate desire to believe that a final solution must surely be close at hand. It is the modern equivalent of leprosy, smallpox or tuberculosis, a malevolent disease whose very name is best avoided for fear of magically attracting its unwanted attentions.

As befits an unknown foe, cancer is associated in the popular mind with wildly inaccurate and conflicting characteristics. Some like to think most cancers are curable, whereas others believe this is true of none; it is often mistakenly regarded as a disease of civilization. Some feel it could be a punishment for wrong-doing or have convinced themselves it is an inherited condition. For many the diagnosis is thought to be tantamount to a sentence of painful death.

In the light of rather the dark, of such ignorance John Cairns's book contrives to be informative, honest and wise. He is a highly qualified and well qualified both lay and medical readers through areas of investigation which range from the geographical distribution of tumours to theories of cell mutagenesis. As director of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's north London laboratory his position affords him a long history of present status of his subject, reminding us both of cancer's worldwide domination and the necessary narrow microbiological focus of much contemporary experimental research.

All his scholarship would, however, have been in vain without

the ability to express complicated concepts clearly. He helps the uninitiated by prefacing each chapter with a short summary, and points out, in a way that even he skipped entirely if, despite the diagrams, they prove too technical. Not an easy matter, addressing several audiences, but an endeavour which Freeman, as publisher of the Scientific American, have made peculiarly their own.

The reason for the seeming prominence of the book today is that it is a comment on what Ernest Gruenberg has called "the failures of our successes." As contagious epidemics have receded most people in the Western world can now expect to live to a ripe, or possibly over-ripe, old age. Most cancers undoubtedly take years to develop. But it would be quite wrong to regard malignancy as an inevitable concomitant of ageing, or of predominantly different types which epidemiological studies have uncovered in settled societies in various parts of the world, together with the evidence from immigrants, has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that environmental factors must play a highly significant part in cancer aetiology.

This is perhaps clearest in regard to the association between certain skin cancers and excessive sunbathing, but by light-skinned races, but very high incidence of liver cancer amongst sub-Saharan Africans, and oesophageal cancer in parts of Iran are every bit as obvious, but still mysterious. Indeed, it is in very few cases, notably in relation to lung cancer and cigarette smoking, that a specific environmental agent has been indicated. "In retrospect," Cairns remarks wryly, "it is almost as if Western societies had set out to conduct a vast and fairly well controlled experiment about several million deaths and using their own people as experimental animals".

Prevention, so popular today, is the main desperately hampered by

our continued ignorance of the fundamental triggers of the cancer and our inability to modify the mechanisms which monitor normal cell growth. What is most astonishing about our bodies is not that the occasional cell should embark upon a wild course of uncontrolled self-multiplication but that all the rest submit to such admirable biochemical control. Screening of large social groups is another rallying cry, based on the sensible idea of catching the disease early, but it is often founded on a naive belief in the basic ingrained tendency of some tumours to spread by way of the blood stream before they are locally perceptible.

When it comes to treatment our stock-in-trade consists of knives, powerful burning rays and poisons—all, however, not very different in the sheer removal of an offending object is as reassuring (and considerably more effective) for patients of modern medicine as for the patrons of nyctag and shamans. But much of this therapy, however skilful, is blunderbuss affair—complicated, costly and not very successful.

With the exception of lung cancer, none of the common cancers are much commoner today than they were 50 years ago, treatments are empirical and knowledge and by limited by our knowledge and by the patient's unwillingness to forgo present gratification in the interests of an imaginary, gory future. So, where do we go from here? Speak of cancer and the outposts of imperialism seem to be shouting. Cairns offers little immediate comfort to those of us who regard the conquest of cancer as if it were some five-year plan on a collective form which is certain to succeed provided everyone has enough enthusiasm. Sadly, he seems to think society will have to live with cancer for quite some time.

Una Maclean

Una Maclean is reader in community medicine at the University of Edinburgh.

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BOOKS

Contributions from Olduvai

Olduvai Gorge: my search for early man
by Mary Leakey
Collins, £6.50
ISBN 0 00 211613 8

In most people's minds the name of Leakey and Olduvai are synonymous. The exploits of the Leakeys at Olduvai Gorge were often headline news in the 1960s, and articles in the *National Geographic* helped enthusiasts all over the world to keep in touch with the seemingly never-ending series of finds from this East African fossil site. Louis Leakey was charismatic: a man with a colourful personality and a born communicator. In the United States he regularly drew, and held spell-bound, huge lecture audiences. But the same bold, and sometimes rash, interpretations which helped attract and sustain public interest, caused fellow scientists more than a little discomfort. In a community in which self-interest too often dictates that dullness and scholarship go hand in hand, Louis Leakey's flair made him suspect. The study of human origins was too often considered to be just a colourful pastime, rather than a bona fide scientific endeavour.

However, events of the past decade have quite justifiably brought about a revision of this judgement. We now take it for granted that field programmes are carried out with rigour as well as vigour. Hypotheses based on fossil and archaeological evidence are regularly tested in the laboratory, scanning electron microscopes and complex statistical programmes are now the stock in trade of palaeontologists and archaeologists alike. Dating methods are more accurate,

and the interaction between palaeontologists, archaeologists, geologists and geophysicists has done much to promote theoretical and practical advances in geochronological research. Palaeoenvironmental and palaeogeomorphological data have also improved to match advances in other fields. It is no exaggeration to say that these new research approaches to the problems of human origins represent a new paradigm; it is also no exaggeration to point out that this paradigm grew out of research by the Leakeys at Olduvai Gorge.

This book by Mary Leakey is thus doubly welcome for it helps to redress historical imbalance in two ways. Not only does it outline the richness and importance of the contribution from Olduvai, but it also reminds us that the research effort at Olduvai was always a joint one. Mary and Louis Leakey shared equally in the planning, labour, disappointment and vicissitudes of work at the gorge.

For many years Mary Leakey has worked untrammelled at excavations in the gorge; indeed, it is now her real home. Her archaeological excavation technique is second to none, and has set an example for a whole generation of Old World prehistorians. But perhaps more important is her success at making archaeologists conscious that their research does not stop with stone tools. Working along with Richard Hay and other colleagues, she has succeeded in integrating data from rocks, fossils and tools to make valid and testable hypotheses about the habitat and life-style of the early hominids.

The book contains quite detailed, and perhaps in some places too detailed, descriptions of the geology, hominids, stone tools and fossil animals, together with more personal accounts of the history, circumstances and results of the research work carried out at Olduvai.

Of the detailed sections, I found the one on fossil fauna much the best. Mary Leakey succeeds in showing how much faunal remains can tell us about climate and habitat. The habitat preferences of elephant shrews, catfish and fossil slugs sounds unimpressive, literary material but in this book the problems they help to solve are treated with enthusiasm and clarity. The section on stone tools takes the reader through the types of stone industries found at Olduvai: both this discussion, and the exposition of the geology of the gorge would have benefited from a more detailed sectional diagram of the beds with the sites located on it. A list of hominid finds would also have been a help.

At times I think the use of technical terms will make the going tough for lay readers, but they should be encouraged to persevere. All, or part, of the book will be useful to teachers and students of any course which touches on human evolution. Even though it is offered as a popular book, those more closely involved in human origins research should not ignore it, since it brings together information which is otherwise widely scattered, and some of it has not been published elsewhere.

This book should help a wider public recognize the debt which human origins research owes to Mary Leakey. Her single-minded dedication to work at one place, over a period of 45 years, is in sharp contrast to the modern philosophy of quick "in-and-out" research programmes, funded on a three-year or five-year basis. It would be a great loss if sustained personal research such as this became a thing of the past; we would all be the poorer.

Bernard Wood

Bernard Wood is reader in the department of anatomy at The Middlesex Hospital Medical School.

Lives of the stars

Stars and Clusters
by Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin
Harvard University Press, £15.75
ISBN 0 674 83440 2

Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin died in December 1979 shortly after this, her last book, had been published. In her long career she made many important contributions to astronomy and to its teaching. She was the author of many books including popular books such as *Introduction to Astronomy* and *Stars in the Making* and more serious works such as *The Galactic Novae*. An initial problem with the present book is that it contains no preface or introduction to tell us for what audience it is intended. My first impression was that it was going to be a popular or at least a semi-popular work and this view was strengthened by the inclusion of a comprehensive atlas of bright stars. However, in most of the book a considerable knowledge of astronomy and physics is implicitly assumed. The book is suitable for a serious amateur but it also contains information which will be better appreciated by students or professional astronomers.

The book is essentially a survey of the properties of stars and of the physical groupings of stars known as open or globular star clusters. Although results of theoretical calculations are presented and interpretation of the significance of the observations is included, there is no detailed theoretical discussion. The book is a description of the life history of a star by analogy with Shakespeare's seven ages of man; and quotations from the latter are frequently introduced. Mrs. Payne-Gaposchkin follows stars from their still mysterious birth from interstellar clouds of gas, through their early evolution to their very sedate phase as main sequence stars, in which, like the sun, they radiate

energy which is released by the fusion of hydrogen into helium. She discusses later in the book, in which a star may become a red giant or a supergiant but she makes only very brief comments on the final stage of evolution in which a star may become a white dwarf, a neutron star or a black hole.

Mrs. Payne-Gaposchkin has had a strong professional interest in variable stars, which are stars whose light output, unlike that of most stars, is not constant but varies either periodically or irregularly. She is particularly concerned to show that variability is not usually something to be regarded as accident or disease but that it is a natural property possessed by a star at a particular stage or stages in its life history. The sun is not a variable star now but it may be one in a few thousand million years.

Another important theme of the book is the manner in which observations of star clusters enable the ages of the clusters to be determined. This gives information about the way in which the properties of stars and clusters have changed during galactic history, information which cannot be obtained from individual stars.

This book is very clearly and interestingly written, but I am still uncertain for what audience it is really intended. Many of the introductory remarks to chapters are very elementary and the frequent lists of stars of different types, which are easily visible to the naked eye, make it look like a book for the amateur. At the same time, references to frequently made topics in astrophysics which have not been fully introduced or explained. The book does contain a wealth of useful information such as a remarkably good selection of colour magnitude diagrams of star clusters and lists of the brightest stars in several categories. It will, no doubt, be read with interest by a variety of readers with different motives.

R. J. Taylor

R. J. Taylor is professor of astronomy at the University of Sussex.

Evolutionary processes

Genetic Models of Sexual Selection
by Peter O'Donald
Cambridge University Press, £15.00
ISBN 0 521 22533 7

Mathematical Population Genetics
by W. J. Ewens
Springer, DM59.00
ISBN 0 540 09577 2

In the past 20 years, there has been a state of work on the mathematical theory of evolution, based firmly on the foundations of population genetics laid by Fisher, Haldane and Wright. The field has, however, shown signs of a division of labour between those interested mainly in the analysis of the outcome of evolution for specific biological situations, and those who are more interested in constructing sophisticated, general models of the evolutionary process. The two books under review exemplify this division. Both are highly technical and aimed at the graduate student and research worker with a knowledge of population genetics theory.

O'Donald's book is to a large extent a review of his own work on the theory of sexual selection, although his first two chapters give a rapid survey of the subject of sexual selection as it has developed since Darwin. Darwin's theory sought to account for the evolution of characters such as peacocks' tails that are of no apparent direct adaptive value to their possessors, and that are frequently limited to adult males. He suggested that they conferred an advantage in competition between males for possession of a mate, either because of their use in fights between males, or because of female preferences for striking colours and unusual ornaments in their mates. As O'Donald points out, the theory of sexual selection through female preference was not fully accepted in Darwin's time, and played a surprisingly small role in the neo-Darwinian synthesis of the 1930s and 1940s. O'Donald convincingly pins a large share of the responsibility for this neglect on Julian Huxley, whose writings on sexual selection were remarkably confused but apparently highly influential.

There has, however, been a reassessment of the importance of sexual selection since the 1960s, and it is now one of the mainstays of "sociobiology". O'Donald's concern is mainly with the construction and analysis of the population genetic models which can be used to test the validity of female preferences for male characters under simple genetic control. Chapters 2 and 3 set out the framework of his models of female preference. These mostly assume a fixed probability that a female will mate with a male of the preferred type, independent of the frequency of that type in the population.

Ewens' new book is a more theoretical population genetic model aimed at giving the reader a thorough understanding of the mathematical theory. As Ewens states in the introduction, it is concentrated on a presentation of selected topics, rather than attempting a comprehensive survey of the whole field. The book is particularly useful in the area which is the most interesting to mathematicians, and to Ewens himself has made large contributions. The presentation is lucid, though terse, and the book will be an indispensable reference for theoretical geneticists.

For theoretical geneticists, I suspect, he found hard work, both by mathematicians in a general assumption of a complex background of general knowledge, and by biologists in the more sophisticated framework than is standard in texts on population genetics.

Brian Charlesworth

Differential calculus

Differential analysis: differentiation, differential equations and differential inequalities
by T. M. Flett
Cambridge University Press, £18.00
ISBN 0 521 22420 9

The theory of the differential calculus of functions of normed vector spaces is an important one, which allows us to treat problems in the calculus of variations, control theory and other areas within the same general framework as simple problems concerning the optimization of real-valued functions.

The author of this book does not attempt an encyclopaedic treatment of the theory but restricts himself to a study of directional derivatives and the Fréchet, Gâteaux and Hadamard differentials, together with their applications—principally to the theory of ordinary differential equations. Within this area his exposition is fairly comprehensive and includes results which were not previously readily available. A particularly nice feature of the book

are the extensive historical notes. These are not only interesting in themselves but are useful in lending structure to the theorems presented in the body of the text.

The general level of the book is such as to make it fairly accessible to third-year undergraduates in mathematics. One of the appeals of the book is that it is not too large, and it is only rarely that one has to be paid for choosing this book over a more extensive and more expensive one.

Professor Flett died at the age of 52, leaving the manuscript nearly complete. Work to copy and edit the manuscript was done by the author's wife, Mrs. Flett, who brought the book to completion. It is a fine job she has done.

K. G. Binmore

K. G. Binmore is professor of mathematics at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

BOOKS

Style as protagonist in Gogol

The Creation of Nikolai Gogol
by Donald Fanger
Harvard University Press, £9.90
ISBN 0 674 17563 4

Gogol would have been a peculiar case in any context, but in the pantheon of Russian nineteenth-century men of letters he has a very odd figure indeed. Henri Troyat, his most recent biographer, portrays Gogol as a misogynist and pathological liar who rewarded his supporters with high-handed treatment and who towards the end of his life developed a religious mania before declining into insanity.

More significantly, his works reflect a quite different world from that depicted so fully and lovingly by Pushkin, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Chekhov and even Dostoevsky. The nineteenth-century Russian realist critics and many of their Soviet successors have tried to press Gogol into their preferred mould and make him the father of a "naturalist" school of fiction, but for most readers his works were and still are a little too puzzling, in the charge that they lack depth and conviction, the plots are thin or bizarre, the exuberant language is somehow off-centre, and the author's tone can be highly disconcerting. This odd lack of definition has allowed commentators in Russia and elsewhere to interpret him in an astonishing variety of ways, hailing him as almost anything from realist to devotee of the absurd.

In *The Creation of Nikolai Gogol* Donald Fanger, professor of Slavic and comparative literature at Harvard, is not directly concerned with either Gogol's biography or the complex history of Gogol criticism, but with the mainstays of the writer's style. Though he refers to Gogol's life, this is largely to emphasize our ignorance of much of it and to make the point that it was precisely a lack of personal experience which exercised a decisive influence on Gogol's art, in that a certain hollowiness became a central characteristic of the writer's whole being. Professor Fanger also frequently refers to the work of other commentators, from Belinsky to Shinyavsky and Lotman, but only where they illuminate his own views, never as mere padding or as an easy substitute for personal reflection.

The author's main thesis is that style is the animating force of all Gogol's texts, to the extent that language is often the only active protagonist in the Gogolian universe, but so active a protagonist that portraits of what is essentially static come to seethe with energy.

He develops and illustrates the argument with great verve and subtlety as he traces Gogol's career from the early evenings on



Gogol: a lack of personal experience influenced his art.

a farm near Dikanka, through the *Mirgorod Tales*, the *Petersburg Stories* and *The Inspector General*, to *Dead Souls* and the ill-fated *Selected Passages from Correspondence with Friends*. Throughout we are given criticism of a high order, which provides insight after insight into the essence and originality of Gogol's literary method.

Gogol's originality is further emphasized at the end of this study when the author attempts to pin-point the salient characteristics of the weird world projected by Gogol's imagination. He convincingly shows it to be a world of instability, evasion and misidentification, governed by the universal principle of *he is not quite*—an all-pervading sense that nothing is as it appears to be or as one might expect it to be. This is no fresh discovery, but it has rarely been better set forth than in Professor Fanger's two concluding chapters.

The Creation of Nikolai Gogol is not an easy book to read—ironically, because of Professor Fanger's own addiction to complex language. At times his formulations can be very effective, as, for instance, in the study's deliberately ambiguous title, in the paradoxical chapter heading "Perspectives from Absence" or in the chilling description (with its echo of Hobbes) of

the hero of *Vip* as "one individual, supremely ordinary, solitary, kindless and doomed". At other times, however, aphorisms like "the Gogolian universe objectifies a faith in communicables as intuition" are a little too compressed for clarity, and the vocabulary can become somewhat esoteric, as when we read, for example, of "pillipilistic speculation". The author can also lapse into ugly jargon, such as "antididactical problematics" or "the thematics of individuation" or, worse still, produce a pretentious but uninspired sentence like, "his career begins increasingly to resemble his fiction, to turn enigmatic through a symbolic merging that eventuates in a metaphysical entity which even now goes by his name". Not even Gogol is as difficult as that.

In sum, though, Professor Fanger's volume is a most impressive achievement. He has brought to a re-reading of Gogol a cultivated and sensitive critical intelligence and sets out his findings in a stimulating, original work which will long be read with profit by scholars and teachers—though, unfortunately, never with ease by their linguistically less accomplished pupils.

D. J. Richards

D. J. Richards is head of Exeter University's department of Russian.

Texts for the new reader

A Medieval French Reader
edited by C. W. Aspland
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £15.00 and £7.50
ISBN 0 19 870351 1 and 815761 4

Inevitably the shadow of the well-known *Historical French Reader* by Studer and Waters, published in 1924, hangs heavily over Professor Aspland's *Medieval French Reader*. In his preface Professor Aspland seeks to give his book its own identity by denoting the ways in which it differs from its much-used predecessor. It has been "written to provide university students with an introduction to medieval French literature", whereas Studer and Waters were concerned to provide passages "suitable for instruction in historical grammar" and to this end did not shrink from including passages of Vulgar Latin.

Professor Aspland is concerned to further the cause of medieval French literature, and one consequence of this is that he has grouped his texts in literary genres rather than generally giving longer extracts than Studer and Waters, seeking to make these important central episodes and complete dramatic units. Because of the

greater length of the extracts it contains, *A Medieval French Reader* has only 30 different pieces against *Historical French Reader's* 65.

As is to be expected, Studer and Waters and Professor Aspland have sometimes taken passages from the same texts. This has happened in about a dozen cases but complete overlapping occurs with only four works: the *Strasbourg Outlaw* (which could have been omitted in a literary collection), the *Sequence of Saint Eulalia*, Froissart's account of Edward III's expedition against the Scots, and the lyric, *Quant vient un mal*. Professor Aspland, in fact, has gone out of his way not to give the same passages as Studer and Waters, and this policy may explain why he has drawn on the second part of the *Life of Saint Alexis* when the opening of this poem has so much more to offer young readers. However, his selections from the *Song of Roland* do have the advantage of showing the anonymous hero alive and active, although only just in the second of them. It is a pity that in a collection of medieval texts assembled to introduce students to the beauties of French literature there is no François Villon, Parthenay, or Philippe de Commines.

Although *A Medieval French Reader* is intended to cater for literary interests, one is left with

the impression that it is above all the work of a philologist. The texts have all been transcribed afresh from the manuscript sources, the notes (mainly linguistic) on them are full and helpful and the glossary, though selective, is commendable. On the other hand, comments on points of literary interest in the introductions to the texts are rather sparse and not, to my mind, always very interesting. These are compensated for, to some extent, by the selected bibliographical references to important monographs and articles which precede each text.

This Reader will be ideal for students wishing to work on their own. The abundant help given by the editor can be expected to reduce the contribution the teacher will need to make and allow him, as well as the student, to cover the ground fairly quickly. Let it also be said that just as Studer and Waters' collection has often been put to literary use, despite its philological origins, so Professor Aspland's book, despite its literary bias, may equally well be plundered for the purposes of imparting historical grammar. As a dual purpose book it may prove to be even more useful than Studer and Waters' Reader.

T. O. Jones

Dr. Jones is lecturer in French at Southampton University.

Capturing the tone

Way of All the Earth
by Anna Akhmatova
translated by D. M. Thomas
Secker and Warburg, £3.90
ISBN 0 436 01100 X

In 1976 Mr Thomas gave us a highly praised translation of Akhmatova's *Requiem* and *Poem without a Name*, and in a recent edition of the TLS he has spoken eloquently of the difficulties the translator has to face. Here he provides us with a selection combining 94 short poems and fragments with the long poems by the *Seashore* and *Way of All the Earth*. It is a representative selection, containing verse from the five books that had appeared by 1921, from the wartime editions, and from the postwar period, right up to the poet's death.

The selections with which Mr Thomas's should be compared are Richard McKane's *Anna Akhmatova: selected poems* (1969) Stanley Kunitz and Max Hayward's *Anna Akhmatova: selected poems* (1974) and Walter Arndt's *Anna Akhmatova: selected poems* (1976). Arndt provides by far the largest selection, 175 poems, but puts himself out of the reckoning by retaining rhyme throughout and reducing the poems to a doggerel reminiscence of Pound's first *Eugene Onegin*. Thomas provides a much larger selection than either McKane or Kunitz, and includes 56 poems that do not appear in either of their collections. But despite occasional errors, McKane and Kunitz keep closer to the original, and their translations are the better for it.

Thomas provides an excellent, close translation of *By the Seashore* and of certain of the lyrics. Too often, however, though generally capturing Akhmatova's tone quite well, his versions are marred by any

number of inaccuracies and minor changes, of person or number, for example, but most often of tense, and additions or omissions that seem unmotivated and unnecessary. Important words are not translated. Some dedications and epigraphs are omitted, and the notes are very erratic, informing the reader about only some of those mentioned in the text.

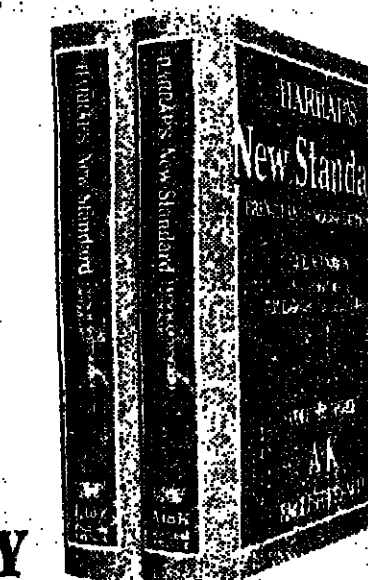
One stranger in particular seems almost willfully to depart from Akhmatova's practice and to destroy her effects. In the original, there are very few lines that are not syntactic units, yet Thomas frequently introduces enjambements of single words or groups of words between lines, and even between stanzas, with extremely jarring results. The couplets of *Summer Garden* are likewise needlessly sacrificed.

Sometimes there are actual misunderstandings of the original. To earthly silence... is not addressed to the heart, and the stranger in the poem is in fact a stranger, a child. In *I hear the oriole's above* grieving voice omission of the words *Teper* by leads the translator to suggest that "joyful cynicism" is actually present in the field. Most crucially, the sense of *I won't beg for your love* is ruined by replacing the ironic "I do not care of happiness" with the inappropriate and in context absurd "I can not yet cure of happiness". Despite these shortcomings, this collection does bring more of Akhmatova to an English reader. But what is really needed, indeed long overdue, is a large-scale exercise in close translation.

Julian Grafty

Julian Grafty is lecturer in the department of Russian language and literature at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London.

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BOOKS

Dante's plainness and magnificence

The Divine Comedy
translating by C. H. Sisson
Carcanet Press, £8.95
ISBN 0 8563 5 273 X
Dante
George Holmes
Oxford University Press, £3.50 and
95p
ISBN 0 19 287505 1 and 287504 3

Dante dominates English literature as perhaps no other foreign poet does, certainly no other poet of the modern foreign languages. Some even of what one thinks of as the most memorable native lines of English poetry are his: "For pities' remembrance, in gentleness, 'The curfew tolls the knell of parting day'; 'I had not thought death had undone so many'. But no one yet has kept up the poetic inevitability of those lines even for a whole canto, much less a full version of the Comedy. We run to every new one in hope. And to whom should we run more eagerly than to C. H. Sisson? His own poems, such as *The Usk*, show that he has just the right combination of a convoluted but pure metaphysical style with lucid natural imagery.

His verse translation of the Comedy, however, is odd. It seems to be literal, but if it is it contains inaccuracies. Surely, for example, *men che di rose, a più che di viole* must mean as Binyon gives it "less than of rose, more than of violet" and not, as Sisson, "less than of roses than that of violets"; and why leave out the *orribile* that describes the tower where Ugolino died? Are these perhaps too romantic? A great deal is sacrificed to the ideal of informal modernity. The most obvious formal pattern of the Comedy, one that is at once romantic, simple and profound, that every part ends with the word "stars" is sacrificed by ending the *inferno*:

And then we emerged to see the stars again
The echoing is so much a part of Dante's universe that it seems perverse to destroy it.

Sisson also abandons rhyme and any precise metrical constraint — the metrical scheme at times seems no more than typographical, though this in itself is good, for an experience with blank verse translations of Dante shows, even a typographical ghost of terza rima makes things stand out. But, probably deliberately, Sisson searches for not much more metre than translation from a cognate language necessarily induces. If someone with an ear for cadence, see Sisson's prose translation out in lines the result would be more accurate than Sisson's and not much less metrical.

What advantages does Sisson then have over Sinclair? His style is more colloquial, more lucid, more consistent, purer; one is sure of seeing Dante through a steady linguistic focus. Yet perhaps not enough. Sisson still produces phrases which it is hard to imagine anyone uttering except in a stage Irish monologue.

To come down here from my happy location.
The effect, oddly enough is not unlike that of pretence at colloquialism in the new Anglican liturgy against which, Sisson, has been impressively leading the attack. Is the trouble that the one metrical constraint Sisson keeps, a rough syllabic equivalence in an approximately line by line version, is actually the most deadly? For neither

has more syllables to most of its sense units than English. Or is it, as with the liturgists, a wish for a magnificence that shall still be modern and plain?
Certainly a style that translates Dante must include both plainness and magnificence; and certainly as William Golding shows in the first pages of *Darkness Visible*, it is possible in modern English. But Sisson thinks Dante: *la decenne sete*, the ten years' thirst, surely suggests intensity as well as duration. Sisson gives "the thirst I had had for ten years". And for that wonderful *aiolo*, the "little thrashing floor" by which Dante conveys his vision of what the earth would look like from the heavens, the small round thing with chaff flying across it which in this century we have seen, Sisson prefers the possible but meagre "little plot". For *tanto oltraggio*, which got "that splendid outrage" out of G. K. Chesterton, Sisson gives "something so out of its way".

Altogether the edition lacks the density and pressure of poetry as it is when forced out by personal creation. Compare Sisson's lovely reminiscence of Dante, which he quotes from *In Insula Avalonia*:

Look, for you must, upon the fine appearance,
The creature had it and is formless dead.
Now come no nearer than to straws in glass.
With his version of the original I was already, and with fear I put it
Into my poem, there where the shades were covered
Completely, and showed up like straws in glass.

Is this absence of pressure inevitable in a faithful and submissive translation? Certainly not: Binyon has more of it partly because he committed himself to the hard struggle with terza rima.

Moreover, the more difficult the Comedy, to my feeling, the better Sisson. I could not pay a translator a higher compliment than this: that I enjoyed the *Paradiso* in his version as I am forced to realize I have not done before. And an interesting result followed: twice in the Comedy I find it hard to retain sympathy with Dante — at the sheer nastiness of the *Inferno* and at the extreme self-confidence which allows him to give us his speeches when examined on faith, hope and charity

by St. Peter, St. James and St. John, and his being passed by them in a pretty high class.

Poetry, if it persuades us it is poetry, has various powers to make us excuse such things — notably the "let us suppose" by which, in Charles Williams says, the *Inferno* is readable. Hitherto, in a reading ultimately conditioned by Sinclaire and the Temple classics, I have excused the *Inferno*, and found the relevant cantos of the *Paradiso* irritating; in Sisson's version I find the *Inferno* disgusting and the *Paradiso*, as it should be even in those cantos, adorable.

So the *Paradiso* still encourages me to believe that Sisson may be the ideal translator of Dante. There would be no discredit if he could be persuaded to treat this as his first draft. Gilbert Connolly's *The Divine Comedy in English* shows that no previous good translation has taken less than 16 years (Cary's), and he subsequently put his own theories into practice, and, like Sisson, found that the language constantly reflects on the nature and status of their own work.

The overlapping of the two parts is deliberate, since Dr Cave is concerned primarily to show how theoretical critical issues emerge from, and cast light on, "writing in action". Indeed, one of his basic propositions is that sixteenth-century French literature provides a parallel with many of the preoccupations and problems of the modern writer and critic who has also been led to ask fundamental questions about the very nature of his activities. The Renaissance writers and theorists whom Dr Cave studies were, as he rightly points out, being forced to come to terms with the same kind of rapidly shifting methodology and terminology as their modern counterparts, and even more importantly, they too were suffering from the "consequences of Babel" — that is, from the uncertainties of the linguistic model, according to which language is assumed to have a natural and, ultimately, a super-natural grounding.

Once this assumption is questioned, the status of the literary text is immediately brought into question since it can no longer claim to reflect reality. It can, however, reflect upon itself, and on its own status and meaning. This is why, Dr Cave suggests, the works of Rabelais, Ronsard and Montaigne continually call themselves into

question: through the deliberate dislocation of his fictional narrative in Rabelais's case, through the constant rehearsal of poetic "essays" conceived as preludes for an ultimately uncompleted master-work (the *Franciade*) in Ronsard's case, and through deliberately adopting a persistently literary, inconclusive stance in the case of Montaigne.

This self-doubt, it is important to note, is not inherently negative. Although all three writers, may develop of ever writing a complete, self-contained text or of ever equalling the model works of antiquity (which they view both as a standard of excellence and as a threat to the identity and independence of their own works), they do not, in any case, abandon language itself and of literature in order to enrich their own creations — to turn them, in Dr Cave's aptly coined phrase, into "corruptio-nary texts" in their own right, that is, into texts which attempt to capture, via their seemingly endless proliferation, an intimated richness which continually eludes them and to the absence of which they continually draw the reader's attention.

Given the parallels he finds between such works and the preoccupations of *la nouvelle critique*, it is not at all surprising that Dr Cave often has recourse to a similar critical approach, especially in part two. He is particularly anxious, however, that the texts he studies should not be regarded as "local illustrations" of any modern theory. As a result, he rightly refuses to adopt any single modern critical approach (structuralist, Lacanian, Derridean or any other) and holds mixes both new and traditional critical approaches. Despite his own fears, it is difficult not to feel that he effects this rather strange marriage with singular felicity.

My own doubts lie elsewhere. First of all it is difficult to share Dr Cave's view that "an acute awareness of intertextuality is the necessary condition of writing tends to defer the achievement of an integral 'new' text". I am particularly worried about the assertion that "the writer and his text are always suspended between an original wholeness... and future reintegration" (my italics). Ronsard was certainly of a completely different opinion since he was convinced that he could dominate his borrowings (see *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Laumonier, XV, 252); and Dorothy Coleman in her excellent study of the *Gallo-Roman Muse* (1979) quite rightly highlights the positive side to such

But what must have been the impact on Dante's own mind of the act of writing the Comedy? Mr Sisson talks of the moment when the translator and reader alike are faced with the matter — the actual object — the original. "The Comedy is the translator and reader alike are faced with the matter — the actual object — the original". "The Comedy is the translator and reader alike are faced with the matter — the actual object — the original".

He begins with the troupe and their theatres (a useful diagram charts their moves and mergers), their distinctive organization, their styles, their rivalries and the actor's status — unenviable despite his being 'officially' excommunicated. The playwright on the other hand, could never see the theatre as more than a stepping-stone to something better. Corneille, for all his business sense, did not do really well; Molière did, but not as an author; Racine was wise to quit, and in court circles thereafter lived down his past.

A fascinating chapter takes us inside a theatre, with plans and dimensions and all that is known or can be guessed about lighting, curtains, decor and costume.

F. J. Jones is professor of French studies at University College, Cardiff.



Dante, who has been newly translated by C. H. Sisson.

Consolidating time past into myth

La luna e i falò
by C. Pavese
edited by A. D. Thompson
Manchester University Press, £3.75
ISBN 0 7190 0771 2

This novel as well as being his last is perhaps the most important in Pavese's entire literary career and his appearance is welcome. In his preface Mr Thompson suggests that Pavese is undervalued, neglected in this country, partly because of bad translations. But he also acknowledges that the problem extends to the mythological nature of Pavese's literary world which is essentially outside but normal cultural orbit. In this sense Pavese is indeed a

paradoxical writer, at one and the same time clearly a regional novelist and yet a figure with universal implications and claims to attention. *La luna e i falò* is so deeply rooted that it is difficult to transpose it into other cultural climates, and seems to consist simultaneously of a metaphysical sense of alienation and a resolute earthiness and sense of belonging. These features were pervasive in the Italian culture of the time, and no less in its lyricism, than in its prose writings.

Unfortunately Mr Thompson is unable in the brief space of his introduction to "rehabilitate" the whole of Pavese for his English audience and so is obliged to concentrate on a short outline of his life and an analysis of this particular novel. He sees emerging from the writer's personal myth of the Langhe, the social myth of an entire community, reflected in the recollections of the hero, Anguilla, who has all the characteristics of a *déraciné*: an illegitimate birth, an inability to settle down, a wanderlust which takes him as far as highly stylized America, and a longing for permanence which compels him in the end to return to the Langhe where he finds everything still very much the same and yet radically different. As he reminisces the hero occasionally introduces some startling changes of mood and mood: but all the parallel threads of his imagination are drawn together to produce a powerful, almost mythical, and finally consolidated as 'myth' and

time present shown to be nothing more than a form of provincialism and meaningless drift. At the end we are left with an artistic blend of the various elements of the novel, from which the timeless and perennial tragedy of a rustic life emerges through the scoping of the present and a mixture of fragmented myths and characters.

The editor's brief analysis does not take these points well but it could have provided more consideration of the representational techniques involved.

F. J. Jones is professor of French studies at University College, Cardiff.

BOOKS

Open-ended literature

The Cornucopian Text: problems of writing in the French Renaissance
by Terence Cave
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £15.00
ISBN 0 19 815752 5

This work attempts to study the two features which, Dr Cave claims, characterize both the theory and practice of writing in the sixteenth century: prodigality and self-consciousness.

The theory is examined in part one, which largely revolves around the Erasmian concept of *copia*, seen here as a symbol of "writing as an activity at once productive and un-ended". Part two is almost entirely devoted to the three major French Renaissance authors: Rabelais, Ronsard and Montaigne. All of whom extend their initial work in an experimental, open-ended way. There is, however, an distinct division between the two parts, since Erasmus continually puts his own theories into practice, and Rabelais, Ronsard and Montaigne constantly reflect on the nature and status of their own work.

The overlapping of the two parts is deliberate, since Dr Cave is concerned primarily to show how theoretical critical issues emerge from, and cast light on, "writing in action". Indeed, one of his basic propositions is that sixteenth-century French literature provides a parallel with many of the preoccupations and problems of the modern writer and critic who has also been led to ask fundamental questions about the very nature of his activities. The Renaissance writers and theorists whom Dr Cave studies were, as he rightly points out, being forced to come to terms with the same kind of rapidly shifting methodology and terminology as their modern counterparts, and even more importantly, they too were suffering from the "consequences of Babel" — that is, from the uncertainties of the linguistic model, according to which language is assumed to have a natural and, ultimately, a super-natural grounding.

Once this assumption is questioned, the status of the literary text is immediately brought into question since it can no longer claim to reflect reality. It can, however, reflect upon itself, and on its own status and meaning. This is why, Dr Cave suggests, the works of Rabelais, Ronsard and Montaigne continually call themselves into

question: through the deliberate dislocation of his fictional narrative in Rabelais's case, through the constant rehearsal of poetic "essays" conceived as preludes for an ultimately uncompleted master-work (the *Franciade*) in Ronsard's case, and through deliberately adopting a persistently literary, inconclusive stance in the case of Montaigne.

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Given the parallels he finds between such works and the preoccupations of *la nouvelle critique*, it is not at all surprising that Dr Cave often has recourse to a similar critical approach, especially in part two. He is particularly anxious, however, that the texts he studies should not be regarded as "local illustrations" of any modern theory. As a result, he rightly refuses to adopt any single modern critical approach (structuralist, Lacanian, Derridean or any other) and holds mixes both new and traditional critical approaches. Despite his own fears, it is difficult not to feel that he effects this rather strange marriage with singular felicity.

My own doubts lie elsewhere. First of all it is difficult to share Dr Cave's view that "an acute awareness of intertextuality is the necessary condition of writing tends to defer the achievement of an integral 'new' text". I am particularly worried about the assertion that "the writer and his text are always suspended between an original wholeness... and future reintegration" (my italics). Ronsard was certainly of a completely different opinion since he was convinced that he could dominate his borrowings (see *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Laumonier, XV, 252); and Dorothy Coleman in her excellent study of the *Gallo-Roman Muse* (1979) quite rightly highlights the positive side to such

harrowing when she argues that the "return to previous poets means that [the poet] is carrying forward to his successors the constant ebb and flow of tradition and civilization".

Secondly, it is difficult not to feel that Dr Cave's picture of the "problems of writing in the French Renaissance" is based on too narrow a survey. The suggestion that the works of Rabelais, Ronsard and Montaigne are not "monologic" is not, after all, new; nor is this the first study to apply modern critical approaches to these texts. For this reason, it would have been beneficial to have had a wider survey covering more authors. One suspects, moreover, that if more authors had been included (Calvin and Bodin, for example) Dr Cave would have been obliged to modify his position. Finally, I think one must be wary of attributing too much importance to a trend which is currently very strong in French Renaissance criticism, particularly criticism of Montaigne: I refer to the tendency evident in the works of critics like Glauser, Pouloux and Reguin, who emphasize paradox and indeterminacy at the expense of coherence. Dr Cave is, of course, right to insist that it is wrong to overestimate Montaigne, but there are certain constants in his thought which he seems to neglect. It is, in any case, surprising to find Dr Cave dismissing Richard Sneyce's (in my view) excellent attempt to discover what kind of order can be found in the *Essays* in a brief footnote. Such crucial disagreement with a critic whose work Dr Cave quite rightly values very highly ought to merit more detailed examination in a work which often assumes rather than proves that the *Essays* provide an "indefinite interrogative movement".

These and other problems are, of course, quite serious in themselves. They merely represent, however, the negative side to a work which has much to recommend it. It would not be an exaggeration to claim, indeed, that Dr Cave's study is the most important survey of French Renaissance literature since Barbara Bowen's often strangely neglected *Age of Bluff* (1972). I am not sure that all of the evidence fits his case, but the attempt at synthesis is extremely provocative and much of the analysis is of the very highest calibre.

Jim Supple

Dr Supple is lecturer in French at the University of St Andrews.

Behind the scenes with Molière

Seventeenth-Century French Drama: background
by John Lough
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £4.95 and £2.95
ISBN 0 19 815756 8 and 815757 6

As long as Corneille, Molière and Racine are studied here it will be important to know something of the conditions and constraints under which they worked. In what is eminently a social art, Professor Lough concentrates, necessarily, on Paris and on the half-century of the masterpiece.

He begins with the troupe and their theatres (a useful diagram charts their moves and mergers), their distinctive organization, their styles, their rivalries and the actor's status — unenviable despite his being 'officially' excommunicated. The playwright on the other hand, could never see the theatre as more than a stepping-stone to something better. Corneille, for all his business sense, did not do really well; Molière did, but not as an author; Racine was wise to quit, and in court circles thereafter lived down his past.

A fascinating chapter takes us inside a theatre, with plans and dimensions and all that is known or can be guessed about lighting, curtains, decor and costume.

F. J. Jones is professor of French studies at University College, Cardiff.

The social composition of the audience must in the long run have determined the type and taste of the plays offered. This has been the subject of research, we learn here that the pit became much more respectable as the century advanced, though it could still be rowdy; that it was the most numerous part of the house, but not the most remunerative; and that the court and the *honnêtes gens* in their expensive, ill-planned boxes must have retained more influence and certainly more prestige. It points out the small size of the total theatre public — 17,000 at the very most in a city of half a million inhabitants with plenty of visitors. Here must lie the reason for the insecurity of the playwright.

The last chapter grapples the battle of the technical "rules" of drama, which in this age were made to sound so formidable, though the

three great dramatists all protested against their tyranny, and all bent them. Professor Lough's thorough treatment demonstrates the overriding importance of the theory of *vraisemblance*, to which many were deeply committed (mostly those who were not playwrights), but which was always at variance with the needs of a good story and the reality of willingly accepted stage conventions.

The bibliography has some gaps, but a good index completes the book. Modern, in also and scenic, this is nevertheless a compendium — probably definitive. It may prove the most widely useful of all the distinguished contributions Professor Lough has made to the subject for over thirty years.

R. C. Knight

R. C. Knight was until recently Professor of French at University College, Swansea.

Harrap's dictionary

Harrap's Standard French and English Dictionary was originally published in 1940, with a revised edition of volumes one and two (French to English) appearing in 1972. Volumes three and four have now also been revised, and are published by Harrap at £17.50 per volume. The editors have revised

all entries in terms of modern usage, and have added 60 per cent more material. Many new entries are terms from science and industry and economics. The dictionary continues its practice of including colloquialisms and idiomatic expressions from many English and French speaking countries.

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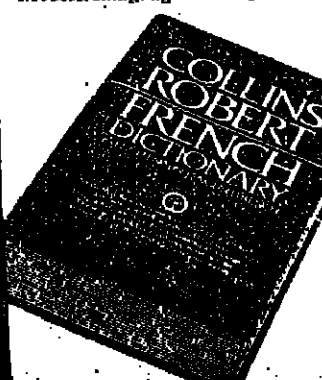
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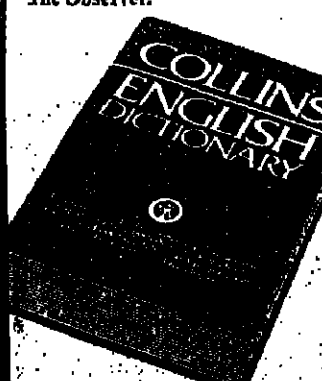
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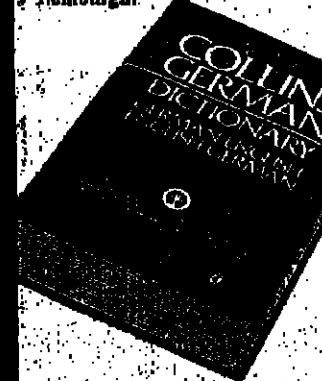
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BOOKS

A nation of grammarians

Uncertainties in French Grammar
by L. C. Harmer
edited by P. Rickard and T. G. S. Carter
Cambridge University Press, £30.00
ISBN 0 521 22233 8

"La France est une nation de grammairiens", said Duhamel, thereby providing the late Professor Harmer with the title of his first chapter, "A nation of grammarians". But are they? Many educated and articulate Frenchmen are certainly much given to dogmatic statements about their language, but that does not make them grammarians. Nor does an uncritical acceptance of the view that their language is characterized by a logicity, an expressiveness and an elegance that places it above all others.

Less pernicious, but no less erroneous, is the widespread impression that literary French is fully and authoritatively codified and that all good writers know and unflinchingly observe the rules. They don't. One learns for instance—take only one of the many verbs commented on by Harmer in chapter two, "Morphological uncertainty"—that both Chateaubriand and Huysmans used *pointné* as the past participle of *pointiller*, and that Flaubert on occasion wrote *pointné*, *pointinait* and *pointinait*. Indeed, the rules themselves are often far from clear, as we discover from chapter three, "Syntactical uncertainty", which surveys at great length the agreement of the past participle, gerunds, and the *faire faire* construction, with briefer discussion of a dozen other topics.

Harmer demonstrates and documents with great thoroughness the hesitation, fluctuation, omissions, misleading statements, muddled thinking, subjectivism, and serious inaccuracy that have all too often characterized the work of French grammarians of repute from the

seventeenth century to the present time. Harmer's exposition is not merely scholarly but eminently readable. He had the gift of bringing out the interest of some singularly unpromising topics—one might doubt whether 25 pages on *faire faire* or 50 pages on the agreement of the past participle would make engrossing reading, but they do. (On the other hand, chapter four, "A case study: the syntax of the past participle", is too long at 180 pages).

Contemporary French grammarians are prone to lament the decline of their language, making much use of words such as *crise*, *marasme* and *corruption*. But if (which I do not believe) there is any real threat to the language, then, says Harmer (in chapter five, "The responsibility of grammarians"), the grammarians themselves are partly to blame. They have given diverse, sometimes widely divergent, rulings, they have not always abided by their own rulings, and, more seriously, they have failed to observe and record modern usage accurately.

The fact of the matter is that French grammar has a lot of loose ends and fuzzy edges. On the one hand there is considerable fluctuation in the usage even of "good" writers, and on the other hand there are still aspects of French grammar that have not been adequately studied. But when all is known and all is unchanging, the language will be dead. Meanwhile, we shall go on teaching the living, and consequently changing and imperfectly understood, language. And if we are both competent and honest—we shall have to tell our students, who would doubtless answer to their legitimate queries on points of French grammar, that in many instances no simple, or even complex but comprehensive, answer exists. This book will strengthen our hand considerably.

Glanville Price

Glanville Price is professor of Romance languages at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Fudging the issues

Hours in the Garden, and other poems
by Hermann Hesse
translated by Rika Lesser
Jonathan Cape, £2.50
ISBN 0 224 01779 9

This is a curious book. From a vast and uneven output six poems have been chosen, apparently at random, from the last 25 years of Hesse's life: the long idyll "Hours in the Garden", the childhood recollection "The Little Boy" (both written in 1936-37), and four short poems: "Pagan" from a journal (1939); "Sketch" (1948); "Pavilion in Winter" (1950); together with Hesse's last poem, written in the week he died, "Creaking of a Broken Bough" (1962).

It is significant that technically all of these poems could easily have been composed by the young Hesse at the end of the nineteenth century. They also all have in common that nostalgic tone of elegiac nostalgia with a touch of nostalgic sentimentality which is common to much of Hesse's poetry. The banality of theme and unori-

ginality of form are offset, it is true, by the accuracy of his limited perceptions, but the title poem and the date of its composition are particularly instructive. They prompt the question: "What use is an eye for an eye? What use is a mild, arabesque, say, on the one hand, if it ignores the jackboots which threaten them? The peculiar quality of Hesse's poetry is that it is a kind of a shield, written a mere two years later: 'What times are these in which a conversation about trees is almost a crime.'"

Because it involves a silence about so many misdeeds? By turning his back on history, as well as on modernism, Hesse effectively condemned his own poetry to mediocrity and provincialism. Despite the tragedies of his personal life and the terrible cataclysms he was able to observe from his retreat in the Ticino, these six poems show, in an exemplary way, how Hesse—in poetry at least—fudged the issues.

Nevertheless, he has been well served: by his translator, printed opposite the German text, these are faithful and musical versions with very few errors. The primary anxiety of "Creaking of a Broken Bough" is especially well captured. Indeed, Hesse's last poem illustrates fittingly what is best in his poetry: the moment when a balance of our and the world's misdeeds is upset, and the poet, in an unpretentious simplicity, melancholy like a minor poet. However, to discover why Hermann Hesse fired the imagination of the fundamentally apolitical flower children, the hippies of the 1960s, one has to look elsewhere in the narrative fiction, above all to *Siddhartha*, *Steppenwolf* and *The Glass Bead Game*.

Michael Butler

Michael Butler is lecturer in German at Birmingham University.

Austria's liberal revolution

Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: politics and culture
by Carl E. Schorske
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £15.00
ISBN 0 297 77772 6

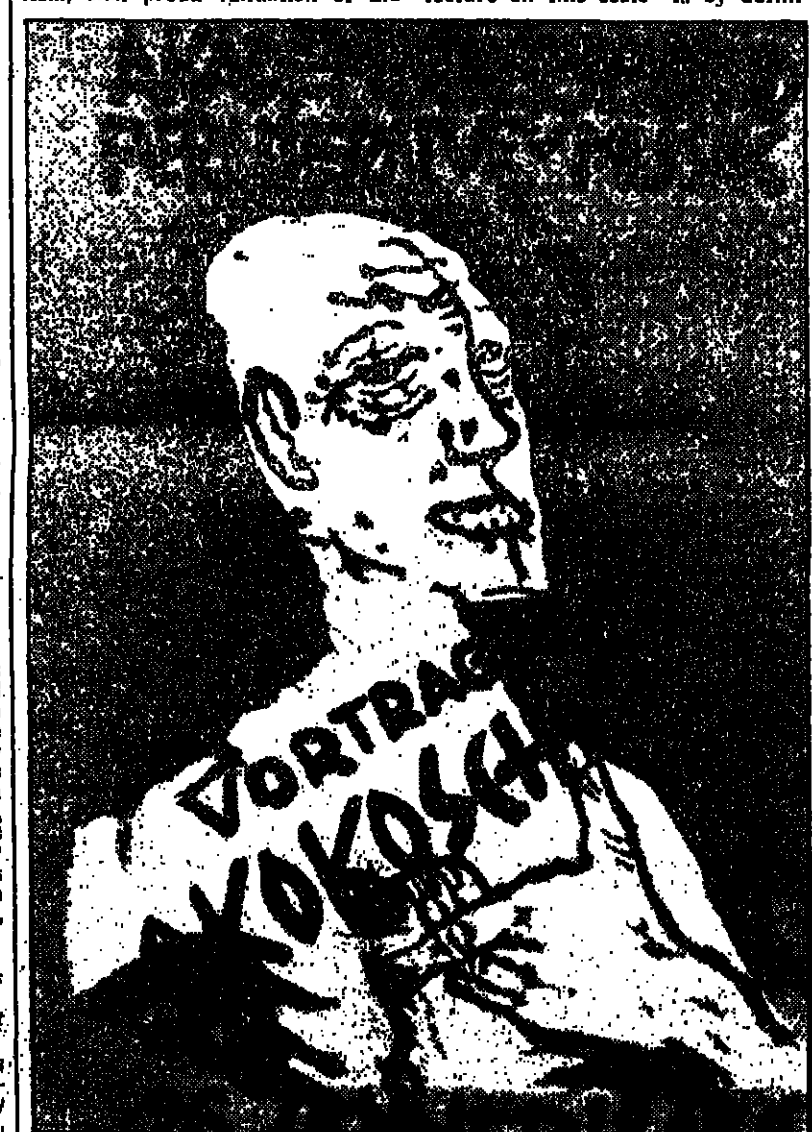
At one point in his enormous, "loose buggy monster" of a novel, *The Man without Qualities*, Robert Musil refers to Kakunien, his code-name for the decaying Austro-Hungarian empire, as "a particularly clear case of the modern world".

Carl Schorske's handsomely produced volume of essays goes a long way towards justifying Musil's claim. Kakunien exhibited a particular disequilibrium, both in political and cultural terms, one which helped to make possible a great many decisive achievements of early European modernism. In one sense, the *Donauschwaben* was a lumbering bureaucratic dinosaur, held together by the sacred notion of the dynastic Habsburg capacity for "absolutism mitigated by slowness". In another sense, the brief ascendancy of the Liberals (1860 to 1890) did make a profound impact on the emotional, cultural, and architectural life of the capital city. Yet the achievement of liberalism, that proud validation of the

centrality and dignity of rational man, of his creative, inquiring mind, was to be short-lived. Liberalism atrophied into know-nothingness, resignation: the political scepticism served to intensify the cultural and intellectual inquiry.

To the vitality and range of such inquiry Schorske's book bears ample witness. He surveys the aestheticized liberalism of Schintzler's protagonist; aestheticized in the precise sense that the disinterestedness of the aesthetic realm (Kant's "interesseloses Wohlgefallen") becomes enshrined in the aimless way of life of the young man-about-town. Schorske examines the *Ringstrasse*, bringing out its curiously paradoxical nature: at one level it underpins the sociable compactness of Vienna; yet it serves to separate old from new, the inner city from the suburbs (and, incidentally, to provide Schintzler with his all-pervasive sexual geography). Schorske perceptively analyses the responses of Sigmund Freud and Otto von Guericke to the "Ring": the former regretting its massivity and pleading for a new intimacy, the latter seeking to make it serve the rational dynamic of the modern city with its swift movement of goods and people.

Architecture—particularly archi-



Self-portrait of Oskar Kokoschka in 1912 poster.

ecture on this scale—is by definition the meeting place of culture and politics. But in the heady world of fin-de-siècle Vienna, politics and culture were merged as a volatile pandemonium.

The only chapter which Schorske devotes to overtly political thinking concerns Schönerer, Laueger, and Herzl. Common to all three, he suggests, was a particular kind of ideological package, one which channelled powerful socio-political energies into an unbroken promise for the future, and a progressive invocation of past virtues and aspirations. This politics as a cultural programme, where the political future is voked by his designs for the cultural past, is a theme which runs through the book.

Similarly, Freud's scientific endeavour invoked what is Schorske, a key metaphor for the art and politics: the father-son relationship. Freud's theory of the psyche, like the theory of the father-son relationship, is a timeless bearer of a psychic King (like politics) is but a particular, contingent manifestation of a deeper conflict. And to Schorske, the father-son relationship is a timeless bearer of a psychic King (like politics) is but a particular, contingent manifestation of a deeper conflict. And to Schorske, the father-son relationship is a timeless bearer of a psychic King (like politics) is but a particular, contingent manifestation of a deeper conflict.

Schorske's book has fine insights to offer. Many of essays have been published previously as articles, and this perhaps, to account for the fragmentary feel of the book. There is not much on the mind-bolts of political and social history, on the broader context of Austrian society. We are other words, offered chaps rather than maps. Moreover, there are other chaps who would discuss Mahler, Musil, Weininger, Kraus.

Schorske could have made use of his suggestive hint that the Austrian psyche was subject to particular tensions because of its traditional (aristocratic) culture, whereas bourgeois-liberal culture tends to be less idealistic, puritanic, moral, philosophical. Perhaps that reason the liberal revolution in Austria made its contribution through legislation or public institutions. Certainly in Vienna, of the late nineteenth century, it was a peculiarly public world, hence the fondness for the theatre, for public exhibitions in the bourgeoisie, and the degradation of the arts, and the degradation of the arts, and the degradation of the arts.

Professor Ramsden's edition of Lorca's justly famous play, aimed at sixth-formers and undergraduates, has many admirable features. In the first half of the introduction Ramsden isolates very clearly the separate threads of heredity, circumstance and passion that constitute the web of fate and, in a lucid examination of the play's characters, reveals their loss as "fully rounded" in the realist tradition, than as "elements in a fatal plan".

The central triangle of the *Novia*, the Boy and Leonardo embody the elemental passions that create the tragic conflict. These three form a "circle of suffering", bearing further witness to fate's inevitability, while outside the circle are the mysterious figures—the Woodcutters, the Moon, Death—who form the voices of fate itself. While the material of his argument is not, perhaps, original, Ramsden expounds it with a logic as unswerving as the fate which is his subject. The second half of the introduction is devoted to a study of Lorca's poetic imagery. His images are shown to be rooted in the reality of Spanish peasant life—in the here-and-now world of the senses—but to have simultaneously emotive resonances which constantly transform the specific into the universal. It is a process whereby the prosaic things of the play—knife, wool, blood, flowers, water, trees, animals—extend beyond an initial appeal to the senses to become pointers to the strange and powerful forces of the unconscious. Ramsden's observations are perceptive and original, but his argument sometimes loses its sense

Conflict of elemental passions

Doña Juana
by Federico García Lorca
edited by H. Ramsden
Mayhew University Press, £3.50
ISBN 0 7194 0764 X

Professor Ramsden's edition of Lorca's justly famous play, aimed at sixth-formers and undergraduates, has many admirable features. In the first half of the introduction Ramsden isolates very clearly the separate threads of heredity, circumstance and passion that constitute the web of fate and, in a lucid examination of the play's characters, reveals their loss as "fully rounded" in the realist tradition, than as "elements in a fatal plan".

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of direction and of examples of excessive number of the play's questions. The text of the *Aguiar* (1954), a very clearly presented and accompanied by footnotes which elucidate possible linguistic difficulties. In the second half of the introduction Ramsden provides a detailed and illuminating analysis of the various songs and poems of the play. The one real criticism that can be made of this edition is that it does not attempt to place the text of Lorca's play in the context of the Spanish theatre of the 1930s, in a work designed to be used by students the absence of a general framework must be regarded as a significant drawback.

Gwynne Edwards is senior lecturer in Spanish at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

BOOKS

Weimar classicism

The Classical Centre: Goethe and Weimar 1775-1832
by T. J. Reed
Croom Helm, £14.95
ISBN 0 85664 356 4

T. J. Reed's study of Weimar classicism displays the strongest qualities of Anglo-Saxon German studies. Lucidly written and jargon-free, distrustful of ideologies old and new, it nevertheless avoids that unsystematic positivism which German critics so often deprecate in their English-speaking colleagues. For Mr Reed offers us not a catalogue of works and authors, but an account of German classicism, guided by a clear and unitary conception. A literary classicism, he says, "may be called the psychological centre of a national literature". The work of Goethe and Schiller certainly represents this in Germany. But their classicism was unique in that it lacked nearly all the preconditions of earlier classicisms, such as social stability, cultural maturity, and intellectual community and conformity. It was the creation of two men, working not in harmony with but in opposition to the divided and provincialized society of their time.

Mr Reed reaffirms the traditional view of the Goethe-Schiller partnership and it needs reaffirming as the culmination of eighteenth-century culture in Germany; but his work is free from those nationalistic and historiographical overtones which have helped to bring this view into discredit. He sees the two poets, with their belief in individual and artistic autonomy and their respect for the world of the senses, as building upon and refining the achievements of the European Enlightenment; at the same time they rejected the rationalistic schematisms and Christian moralisms which had deadened so much of earlier German literature, and

sought instead, in their mature works, to achieve a balance between reflection and experience, between reason and nature. But it was a precarious balance, not always successfully attained, and it soon gave way in nineteenth-century Germany to Romantic scepticism and a surrender of individual values in the face of material and political pressures.

Given the limited space at his disposal and the magnitude of his subject, Mr Reed is necessarily selective. He discusses most of Goethe's and Schiller's major works chronologically and by genre, with a penetrating chapter on Hölderlin. He is particularly impressive on Egmont, Tasso, Wilhelm Meister, the *Römische Elegien*, the *Xenien* (as a document of literary sociology), *Pauline*, and Goethe's late philosophical poems; and in Schiller's case, on *Don Carlos*, the lyrical poetry, *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, and *Wallenstein*.

Inevitably, some will regret his relative neglect of, for example, Goethe's autobiographical writings and the scientific and other theoretical works, and his all-too-brief accounts of *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* and of Schiller's dramas after *Wallenstein*. His bold value judgements—on Egmont and *Der Tod des Empedokles* as failed dramas, on *Don Carlos* as a masterpiece of political theatre, on the intractable obscurity of the late Hölderlin—will also provoke dissent in various quarters. But perhaps from beginning to end, it is compellingly written, and its style is characterized by precision and wit. Despite its brevity, it is the best monograph in English on German classicism in its historical context, and an outstanding addition to a hitherto undistinguished series.

H. B. Nisbet

H. B. Nisbet is professor of German at the University of St Andrews.

Trying to do justice to Fontane

"The Woman taken in Adultery" and "The Poggenpuhl Family"
by Theodor Fontane
translated by Gabriele Annan
University of Chicago Press, £7.50
ISBN 0 226 25680 4

One of the reasons why Fontane has not received from the English-speaking public the attention which most Germanists consider due is that too few translations have been available. It took a French scholar, Douglas Parmée, to provide English versions of *Unwiederbringlich* and *Effi Briest*. Since then there have been, from different sides of the Atlantic and with the varying degrees of success, translations of *Irrenwege*, *Werrungen*, *Schach von Wuthenow*, and more recently, *Frau Jenny Treibel*. Now we are fortunate to have versions of *L'Adultera* and *Die Poggenpuhl*, translated by Lady Annan, introduced in a persuasive essay by Erich Heller, and bound together in a handsome volume.

Neither work is among the very finest of Fontane's narratives. And yet the labour of translation is certainly worthwhile. *The Woman taken in Adultery* has tended to suffer by comparison with *Effi Briest*. Despite its embarrassingly contrived moments, however, it does raise some considerable moral questions, about personal fulfillment and responsibility; it contains discussions which, in their subtlety, fall far short of those encounters between Irrenwege and Wuthenow. In the later masterpiece, and it provides some really strikingly unconventional responses. The trouble is that, the work as a whole and the characters of Melanie and Ruben, in particular, are not substantial enough to bear the weight of the issues raised.

The Poggenpuhl Family has a different kind of slightness: a minimal, loosely constructed plot. Yet the personal and social issues it raises in relation to its portrayal of an impoverished, declining aristocracy in Imperial Germany are beautifully realized and

remain engaging for all their evident obsolescence. To read these versions beside Fontane's original is to be reminded how formidable the translator's task is, how much depends on the texture of the language, the subtle nuances which can hurt or encourage, on the use of literary, biblical, or historical allusion, on the use of puns, on the occasional dialect, on the judicious admixture of elegant Frenchisms or colourful, homely idioms. It is through the variation and fine gradation of these elements that Fontane distinguishes his characters and signals shifts in the level of seriousness of their conversation. And it is here, above all, that the English version, inevitably, loses out.

Positive errors of translation are few and are seldom misleading or disturbing to any serious degree. But in *The Poggenpuhl Family*, where complex social hierarchies operate, it does matter that for example the origins of Aunt Josephine are "bourgeois" and not "petty bourgeois". There are naturally many passages where another translator would have preferred a different idiom and others where readers on this side of the Atlantic must balk at the odd Americanism. But only where the reader is misled, or the choice of idiom seems totally inappropriate is there any cause for complaint. When the heroine of *The Woman taken in Adultery* asks her husband, "When shall we move to the country?" ("Wann ziehen wir hinaus?"), the English reader may be surprised to learn that she is talking of a journey of little over two miles from their home to the village of Berlin. And when the author later writes that it was at least possible for them to "go out" ("hinaus"), the fact that he is talking about this same move becomes obscured. When van der Straaten says of him that he is "no older" ("nicht älter"), the reader may wonder where the alleged "malice" lies, which is certainly present in the original: "Nun, das ist gerade alt genug" ("Wohl, das ist alt

enough"). He may also wonder what transformations Melanie's sister Jacobine undergoes when she is variously described as "blonde", "red-gold", "reddish-blond", and "a redhead".

At times the German original seems to provide through the surface of the English (for example, "I haven't thanked him well for it"; "he had greedily sucked in every word"; "I'm colossal today"; "O listen and marvel"). At other times the choice of phrase gives rise to unwanted associations. When van der Straaten says of the Capuchins that they are "not my cup of tea", a confusion of beverages seems involved, and when it is said of him that he "had just given Melanie's arm to Elinor and taken the head of the procession himself", some horrifying dismemberment is evoked.

The problems of puns and allusions is met by a few pages of explanatory notes at the end, which are almost invariably helpful, but are too few in number. The decision what not to gloss seems arbitrary; and one wonders whether the notes were undertaken by an independent editor, since one of them directly contradicts what appears in the body of the text.

These criticisms may seem unduly captious when the venture itself is so laudable and the achievement still considerable. After all didn't Fontane himself once comment on all the other translators who take his language and discovered by a punctilious reading of Brunsen, Werrungen, saying, "One must be content if, at least the overall impression is: 'Yes, that's life'". But linguistic details are a different matter and should be considered carefully, since they could well account for the real possibility that Fontane may yet be denied a proper appreciation in the English-speaking world despite the availability of such translations. For in the end it has to be admitted, "No, that's not quite Fontane".

David Turner

David Turner is senior lecturer in German at Hull University.

Medieval German culture

Essays on Medieval German Literature and Iconography
by P. P. Pickering
Cambridge University Press, £15.00
ISBN 0 521 22627 9

The words "medieval" and "German" often frighten the otherwise literary-minded. It is a pity that Professor Pickering's essays do not have a more telling title like "The Discarded Image" (they are often close to C. S. Lewis), because the book is an important one. Pickering's concern has been to make clear areas of general knowledge that are no longer general, and to use that clarity to elucidate literary texts from the Middle Ages to Goethe.

The essays fall into two groups, linked with the author's preoccupations with art on the one hand and historiography on the other, but two should be singled out for note as of programmatic importance: the provocative "Economics of History. What is Fiction?" and the 1958 thoughts "On Coming to Terms with Curtius" (the latter grounded uncomfortably with an albeit increasingly pertinent paper on university German studies).

The iconographical papers begin with a discussion of the way the Middle Ages presented the crucifixion (one detail not mentioned but hard to forget is that familiar point of the thorns piercing Christ "to the brain-pan"), and this is followed, with theological soundness, by a recently revised paper on the creation-drawings of the Millstatt Gospels. Others deal with Rupert of Deutz (an originator of many relevant motifs), with Lipsius's *De cruce* ("not the kind of work one leaves lying around")

and finally with Goethe's *Alexis und Dora*.

The second part contains explorations of Pickering's broader historiographical formula for the Middle Ages: Augustine or Boethius. The best essays are a general one on moral codes and history, and a specific one on Hartmann. There is a danger in the use of even such a useful formula that its application might serve only to classify and not to clarify. One wonders about the *Hildebrand* in "Notes on Fate and Fortune". Certainly Boethius; but however much weight we have to lend to *waewurt* ("cruel fate"), still the arm-ring which Hildebrand offers his son, and which links him with the Huns, is far more important to the central existential problem of the work. One wants to hear Professor Pickering on the *Lay of Ludwig*, a work where the poet keeps his historiography splendidly distinct from the events described.

But it is hardly appropriate to tell Professor Pickering what to read. He tells us, in essays on Byzantium we are gently, modestly, but very firmly aimed towards a selection of medieval writings which we really ought to go away and read. He is quite right. Some of these essays were lectures, but the academic frustration of things not followed up are more than outweighed by the entertaining honesty of a broad and pragmatic scholarship. Clio, we are told, "refuses to be finally institutionalized, or to work alone, or to inspire only professional historians". We must be grateful that she, with some of her colleagues, has been inspiring Professor Pickering for many years.

Brian Murdoch

Brian Murdoch is senior lecturer in German at Stirling University.

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Union View

Polytechnics'
open plan
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Temporarily, perhaps, the threat which exists to the future viability of many institutions of higher education seems to have receded from the collective consciousness of the teaching community. Yet there is little to encourage the thought that the decline in the number of 18-year-olds going into higher education will not be at least as bad as the forecast in the DES Brown paper "Higher Education into the 1990s".

Some lecturers may be consoling themselves in the polytechnics that the decline will be compensated for a few years by an increase in the number of mature students who form such a substantial part of their recruitment. However, this increase may not be enough to compensate for the loss which must now be expected in the numbers of overseas students in view of the discriminatory fees which are to operate in the polytechnics (and other local authority-controlled institutions).

The question for the staff in the polytechnics must be how their institutions are to remain viable providers of higher education in the face of a substantial decline in their enrolments.

The polytechnics have a reputation for adapting to the changing needs of the community over a period of time. This adaptation has often taken place against a difficult and discouraging background but it has nevertheless been of sufficient merit for groups other than the teaching force to try to claim full

credit for it. How should they adapt now? One direction would lead to the widening of opportunities for those who wish to retrain themselves either for a change of occupation or simply to maintain their expertise in their working profession. Over the years a number of reports have stressed the need for the extension of continuing education, for the acceptance of the concept of education permanente. In 1976, the Association of Polytechnic Teachers submitted in its evidence to the Committee on Continuing Education (the Venables committee) a proposal for making polytechnic education more open. The suggestion was that the polytechnics should adopt to provide for those who, through part-time study or block release or other method, wished to update their expertise or change their professional direction.



The extension of the facilities of the institutions to a wider clientele through the use of distance learning techniques, through CAL and the variation of the academic year led to the use of the title "Open Polytechnic", although there was no intention that there should be replication in the work of the Open University.

In a way, the polytechnics have fulfilled part of this idea through the maintenance of their sandwich courses and the large participation of mature students who often take up higher education on the basis of their experience rather than any formal academic qualifications. The

idea has found encouragement in the Finniston report where it is recommended that there should be statutory study leave for engineers, dentists and other professions. The learning facilities and the identification of facilities for "continuing formation provision (sic)": they do, heaven help us, fall for the trap that one can define a regional basis for higher education. Although it is obvious that the report would concentrate on engineers, it is equally obvious that the same criteria should apply to most other professions.

The Finniston report itself recognized that the polytechnics would hardly be able to meet the new demands upon them with the present system of management. The L.E.A.s are currently establishing a national body which would remove the flexibility of conditions of service under which the polytechnics are currently managing to operate (just). Lecturers will probably greet any demands for them to cope with further problems under the present system with a degree of scepticism. (The recent Clegg report for teachers under which the polytechnics had found the system of reward determination very unsatisfactory.)

Yet the time must be ripe for a new look at the role of polytechnics in the face of new demands. If it is not possible to develop such an open system for the polytechnics under the present organization then it may be that some changes must be made. The alternative is that an opportunity to extend our higher education provision will be lost. For the polytechnic staff, this could mean that by 1990, at the best, stagnation in the face of falling roles instead of a period of challenge in the education of a new and highly motivated cohort of post-experience students.

Stephanie Perrin

The author is chief executive of the Association of Polytechnic Teachers.

The rumble
of distant
bandwagons

Christopher Price

University folk are astute, skimming through the papers of a skunk conference. The University of London is the only one which unhappily could not get to feel the distinct rumble of bandwagons on the move. Time when we were told that the of universities lay in research—or at any rate high-grade undergraduate teaching. Do you remember the reactions to that survey of "what does did?"

How they wrote to The Times how hard, yet unquantifiable, was the research bit. The rumble in the bath in the morning. That was the research bit. The rumble message was that if only they would leave them to get on with whatever they were doing, we would not worry. Quality would flourish. Research would flourish. Leave them to it. The brain market to do what they needed to do was the blue touch paper and the intellectual rockets would go off.

Until, the "level funding" was cut. The present government's retention on the expansion of research expenditure made it impossible to continue the expansion of the universities. At any rate, what Dr Boyson told the National Institute for Careers Education in York a week or so ago.

We are increasingly regaled with statistics telling us that the universities have always held adult (now courses) continuing education in high esteem—something which will come as a surprise to one or two university folk I know who have been labouring in that particular adult corner of the academic vineyard; that more adult and continuing education is needed; that each year there are more undergraduates; that they see this area as full of important roles for the future.

Which I am sure they do. But first, suspect, it is essential to define a little more closely just exactly what we are talking about. It is altogether too easy to slide by sleight of hand from "adult" to "continuing", as though they mean the same thing. They don't. Nor does "continuing" mean the same to everyone. It is a comparatively new word in the English vocabulary of education—a bad attempt at translating the French word "permanent". Now to the French education permanente. In part represents an Illichian, philosophical idea of freeing education from the shackles of schooling; and in part that very concrete, capitalist concept of "recyclage", by which the French mean recycling their citizens—a bit like their waste paper—to keep up with their German Joneses.

This concept has little in common with that of the vice-chancellors and principals and of their colleagues from the Universities Council for Adult Education. They lump together in this category extra-mural/WEA courses, postgraduate studies and students from "other" departments to make a grand total of 377,869 students—a more total of the university undergraduate population. "Continuing" education to the universities now seems to be defined as everything that isn't undergraduate education or research. This is why so far it is difficult to evolve a set of British principles about the proper characteristics of "continuing" education. There is little philosophy and few principles to be found in a rag bag.

Then again, I found myself at a BBC reception the other day, listening to Michael Swann talk about the Corporation's "intensely specially conscious" Department of Continuing Education. He was launching the book of the BBC literacy saga over the past five years. The book is infectiously earnest. The BBC have rechristened their adult education department "continuing", but they are properly giving pride of place to the students at the bottom of the

pile—those unable to read or write. A slice of the "continuing" sector some way from anything the universities have paid much attention to.

Then there is Unesco. Unesco does not yet seem to have fallen for the permanent/continuing jargon. But it, too, is putting its money on the "bottom" end of the continuing ladder, with 100 per cent increase in funds for the "Struggle against illiteracy" due to rise from 5 million in 1978 to 10 million in 1983. It is now easily their fastest growing programme. But again nothing with which the universities can help them very much.

So it seems to me that "continuing" is now a thoroughly inept word, designed to cover at least three clusters of educational need. First, it comprehends the re-training of qualified professionals, increasingly important in our world of Future Shock; something the universities could be quite good at, but still have much to learn from the Open University and others; secondly, it covers the traditional clientele of adult education—those who want to keep their minds alive throughout their working lives and beyond and gain a few new skills in the process. This is something the universities are intrinsically very good at. Thirdly, it covers the vast cohorts in harness; and finally it covers those to whom school was either non-existent or simply meant nothing—the clients of what started off a few years ago as "adult literacy" projects, and are increasingly being redefined as "basic education".

I have always believed what Unesco is now recognizing, that this is where the true "reservoir of talent" lies. (Some of the best literacy teachers are immediate ex-illiterate.) In the web of our competitive meritocracy, grades of O and A level, alpha minus, firsts, but not very good firsts and the like—that this is a reservoir of talent that the universities should be fishing in. I shall only believe that they have a comprehensive commitment to continuing education when they begin to take seriously the whole range of education which adults need, including the most basic. Short of this, they shall be inclined to suspect their commitment as a cosmetic bid for fresh funds as the number of 18 year olds coming out of school begins to fall.

Adult Literacy and Broadcasting, David Hargreaves, Francis, Pinter Publishers, Ltd.

Don's diary

Sunday

One does not expect the streets of Kentish Town to be paved with dons. One could be wrong, for on the corner of the busy high street stands our bit of the Poly, a solid turn-of-the-century pile. Flanked by Camden Council park benches popular with down-and-outs, it has been mistaken for a Rowton House. Yet it has a respectable history of providing higher education to a wide spectrum of students since before even CNA was a twinkle in a mandarin's eye. But our offices are in submerged nissen huts at one side, looking out over (or rather under) a small car park on one side and an Asian newsgroup on the other. Two prominent messages are within view: one a huge, sexist advert for Fiat cars, too high up the wall for even our most active feminists to reach with spraycans; the other the latest slogan on the Happe Chapel (Church of Christ, 1871) which proclaims in large, red letters: "Bodily exercise profiteth nothing", directed no doubt at our B.E. department, who indeed seem to have profited little.

All this obscures the neighbourhood's one interesting building, the turn-of-the-century St Pancras Public Baths, all proud red brick and terra-cotta banding. Fine statues of SS Pancras and George peer out from their niches over potted art nouveau lettering: "Men's First Class" and "Men's Second Class".

Monday

9 am lecture for the Stakhanovites. It's in the "lecture bunker", a basement room with tiered seats and virtually no natural light. We think it may have been the prototype for the new three-in-one mini-Odeons. Then seminars. Between our two groups, we have a former policeman, two taxi drivers, a social refugee, a supermarket manager, several mums, an actor, nurse, TV repair man and bunny girl. All have made sacrifices to become teachers. Their experience and commitment nearly always make for good discussions. For us it's the brightest part of working at the poly, but fulfilling their expectations is sometimes daunting.

Coffee time. Disquiet on some faces after the lecture. Post-Simmonds strip in the Guardian. Convinced that it is our poly she's on, we weekly expect to find thinly disguised and libellous portraits of ourselves.

This evening, we're both on the night shift. Teachers, after a day at the chalk face, come in to follow a variety of in-service courses. Some have battled with difficult pupils and our permanent local traffic jams before getting here. Our flagging spirits are often encouraged by their commitment which many sustain for three years to get a BED.

Both off on teaching practice supervision this morning. Back at the poly at lunch time, we compare notes. Chris has been in a C of E primary school, a gaunt triple-decker still standing sturdily in a vast area of flattened mud enclosed by a corrugated iron fence. He is warmly greeted by the school secretary: "Ah, Mr Cook, we're glad you've come." She takes him to an empty room and turns towards a dusty old school plane. When it is sorted out that he is not the tuner, he is taken to the Headteacher's office. The Head is lying flat on the floor surrounded by nine-year-olds. "Ah, Christopher, come in. I'm sure you'd like to join me on the floor," he says. "Now, children, here's somebody else you can draw round." It's the new maths and a shy, freckled girl tells him he is 5,762 sq cms.

Meanwhile, Colin saw a mixed bunch of turbulent fourth year boys in a local comprehensive. The student-teacher, also the poly's re-elected chairperson, has a extremely light jeans from the back of which hang cigarettes and lighter stick out in a sharply etched line. There is a mixed response to the poem, but

every time she turns her back and reaches to write on the blackboard the boys go strangely silent. Later, Colin is cornered by six enormous boys who demand to know his opinion of the student. When he is non-committal, they become more threatening. One says: "Well, this is a good, man, and don't you forget it." He agrees not to, and is released.

Wednesday

Meeting with head of department about resources. Much haggling. Colin suggests a compromise and is told that he is the "acceptable face of reform in the department". Colin now viewed with suspicion by more militant colleagues. Must stick to his guns in future.

Back in the huts, we peer up at the car park and see the prefect chairperson flash in on her bright orange trials bike. A final vicious roar of the engine sends a neat cloud of blue smoke through our open window at exactly head height. She strides off into the side entrance of the building which has, curiously, a stone above it: "Women's (sic) entrance". Has she noticed?

This afternoon, a departmental meeting. The agenda is interrupted by an emergency motion proposing a ban on smoking in the meeting. ex-Comms and George peer out from their niches over potted art nouveau lettering: "Men's First Class" and "Men's Second Class".

Demands with menace in our pigeon holes. The library wants a variety of books back, old ones, loved ones, neglected ones, and ones we've never heard of. Increasingly acid memos, with copies cunningly sent to the "high and mighty" have been flowing back and forth. Now they demand money!

Thursday

A trip for Colin through the East End to see a student in a Bengali which has a growing number of Bengali pupils, many of whom, recent arrivals, have little or no English. His student is a Sikh. The staff are delighted with her. One says to me: "It's so useful that she can speak to them in their own language. She can't, of course. The pupils all have school uniform. They are bright and enthusiastic. The teacher shows them photographs—houses, factories, a policeman, the docks, a garage, a supermarket, a dog, a car. Then many asks: 'If you have milked a cow?', she asks. All the hands go up.

Chris and I meet trying to jam our cars in the car park before our morning classes. We are reminded of the days when we had to dash off to an annex at Camden Town. Situated above a supermarket, it was at the precise point in the one-way system that your average-sized family saloon would change gear as it raced all the others away from the traffic lights. So, despite double glazing, you had to time your lecture so that you paused in a profound and pensive pose every two and a half minutes to allow the traffic to roar by.

Friday

Lunch today in the col and pie shop (established 1934) just down the road. The walk takes us past the Job Centre, Greek bakeries and a sweatshop with the sign: "Semi-old machinist wanted, good code of pay".

We detour to sample the Oxham Winter Collection which is the source of most of Chris's wardrobe. He finds a rather fetching ex-RAP officer's muffler. Very handy, as this afternoon we are marching against the cuts in education.

Chris Cook and
Colin Parfitt

The authors are senior lecturers in the School of Education, Polytechnic of North London.

Laurie Taylor



"Well, gentlemen, please be seated. Any apologies? From Professors Clack, Dobson and Worzel: I'm sorry, I've made a note of their names and will be sending the usual warning letter."

"Excellent. May I then sign the minutes as a true and accurate record. Any objections? Professor Remitt?"

"Yes vice-chancellor, if you'll excuse me. Just a tiny little point in 9.24.363/808. There's a reference there to my own department which could be misconstrued."

"Which paragraph is this, Professor Remitt? And by the way, would you take your hand away from your mouth when you're speaking?"

"I'm sorry sir. Last but not one, sir. Although the resources committee fully recognized the contribution made to the university over the years by the department of geography, and there is where I think the ambiguity arises—... it was nevertheless felt that it was a complete waste of money to spend a single penny of valuable resources on making any staff replacements in that department in the foreseeable future. Now, of course these are difficult times and I fully recognize that no funds for staff replacement are likely to become available, and that you know best about these matters, but nevertheless the tone of the minute seems just a shade hostile to the department."

"Well, Professor Remitt, I must admit I didn't read it that way. It seems clearly made to the contribution of your department to the university. I should have thought that was quite enough for anyone in the present circumstances. But perhaps you would be satisfied if I were to insert the word 'almost' so it now reads 'almost a complete waste of money'?"

"Yes, thank you very much vice-chancellor."

"Good. Any other objections, Professor Toole, your hand is up, I think."

"Yes, sir. Something on the same lines, sir, I was wondering if 363/808 A might be phrased a little less starkly. I do know that the university is facing many problems but as academics we must be deeply grateful for the university's principles 'stand against involuntary redundancies, but the resources committee reference to the staff of the psychology department as being 'largely a collection of deadbeats and freeloaders who spend more time on outside consultancy than teaching or research' does seem slightly strong."

"It's the word 'largely' which is worrying you, here, Professor Toole?"

"Perhaps we could agree to 'principally'?"

"Thank you sir."

"Well gentlemen, although your comments on these phrases are very welcome, I think we should be careful not to become too pedantic. When there is no money in the kitty and the looming prospect of staff cutbacks we can hardly expect the refinements which characterized our discussion of a few years ago. And incidentally while I am appreciating the fact that you all rise when I come into the committee room I would be obliged if you could in future extend the same courtesy to the bursar and his assistant. I think their new responsibility in relation to the distribution of scarce resources easily merits such an appreciation. Now gentlemen, we'll proceed to the main business of the meeting—but NOT BEFORE EVERYONE IS SITTING UP STRAIGHT."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

More research needed into postgraduate results

Sir—With regard to your article this week "SSRC faces grilling over postgraduate results", may I make a couple of points and a set of recommendations?

First, while I am gratified by the reported publication of the SSRC on the high wastage, I wonder if this extends to the average time spent by those who do complete?

Further, I wonder why it has taken this length of time for it (the SSRC) to become perturbed, when the data has been available for some time?

(See "The First Year of Postgraduate Study, SRHE 1979, for a useful summary of the relevant literature.)

Secondly, the poor figures are not confined to social sciences alone. University College London, reported only one third completing English PhDs (probably, on average, in four plus years) in PhD 1977, the University of Aston reported four-and-a-half years to complete physics in 1979; and the SRC gave similarly daunting figures some 10 years ago.

Such figures as I can unearth from the University of Keele show similar results for several departments across the whole range of disciplines. It may be genuine that North America seems to take four years seven months.

Thirdly, it is known that in some situations these figures do not obtain. At Keele, no department reports less than 50 per cent of PhD students through, and in three out of a last year, I believe Monash University has similar results for its education department.

What is surprising, in the light of all this, is that the Science Research Council seems remarkably loath to research why there are such poor average results; why it does not inform prospective researchers; and why no one has tried to determine what the differences come from.

Although M. C. Gunk and A. Swann have attempted this for the United States, "The Interaction of Student and Program Variables for the Purpose of Developing a Model for Predicting Graduation from Graduate Programs over a 10 Year Period" Research in Higher Education Vol 8 1978; and Liam Hudson suggested some reasons for subsequent post-doctoral success in

with its policy of open admission has given women access to educational opportunities in the hitherto restricted areas of science and technology. In 1978, with the proportion of women particularly in research into women studying technology in the Open University is distorted.

The strong positive implications of the survey (reported by Charlotte Batters in April 18) were that mature women with long university mathematics, without the advantages of either extensive basic science education at school or technology relevant working experience since leaving university, had achieved academic success when studying a traditionally male dominated area. Furthermore, it was overwhelming evidence that they positively enjoyed the technology foundation course, considered it personally and socially relevant, and stimulated by the new intellectual processes involved.

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"Picking winners. A case study in the recruitment of research students." *New Universities Quarterly*, Winter 1977.

May I therefore request, through you, that the research councils first investigate the various theories advanced by supervisors, departments, and institutions to see whether they can be substantiated, with regards to reducing the excess time and wastage (I have a good set to start with, if they lack ideas).

Secondly, where it is shown that institutional work (demonstrated, etc.) does not complete the time, then a more adequate compensatory grant should be allowed for the research; that the student is made aware of this at the onset; and if such work increases the wastage rate that it then be supported in such a way that the student rates return to the average.

Thirdly, that a clarification of the purpose, in detail, of higher degree research programmes be made.

Finally, that a guide to research practice be produced to assist both new researchers and their supervisors, which will incorporate the substantiated theories predicting the factors influencing excess time and wastage.

As in all policy matters, sound evidence is more likely if it is preceded by research.

Yours faithfully,
IAN CLEMENTS,
Flat J.K. The Hawthorns,
Keele, Staffs.

Sir—I should not be thought that the complaints of John Riddridge and John Wakeford against the SSRC represent the unanimous view of the BSA membership. Indeed, in our opinion what we are witnessing is a serious and constructive attempt by SSRC to revise their position.

As long ago as 1946 the Clapham committee recognized the danger of an over-expansion of the social sciences drawing able researchers into teaching and administration before they could consolidate their early experience. This is precisely what happened in the 1960s, 1970s with the result that SSRC became dominated by the interests

of university teachers, with its funding being mainly directed into small-scale and subordinate research activities. Postgraduate studentships, in turn, came to reflect the predominance of theoretical teaching at an undergraduate level, the inevitable consequence of the limited research experience of the teachers.

The SSRC is therefore right to recognize that its prime objective is to act as a research council. This necessarily involves some detachment from the interests of teaching, particularly given the archaic tenets of those, the training of postgraduate students, has already received much publicity. Taken as a whole, university departments have done less well in research training than in the production of university teachers, a commodity which is no longer in such demand. Thus, while the Hilsley plan has its defects, it is surely more realistic than anything else on offer.

The second point which is of equal importance but has received rather less public attention, concerns the future structure and funding of research. Good empirical research requires a nurturing environment and up till now SSRC has not, perhaps, shown quite the same skill at creating and sustaining the appropriate kinds of organization as have the more senior research councils. It is therefore about time for the BSA to protest as loudly as just the moment when the SSRC is showing signs of serious thought upon the matter.

We would not claim that Posner and his council have got all the right answers. However, their proposals are sufficiently constructive to merit something rather more than an unmitigated reflex opposition of the BSA leadership.

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"Picking winners. A case study in the recruitment of research students." *New Universities Quarterly*, Winter 1977.

May I therefore request, through you, that the research councils first investigate the various theories advanced by supervisors, departments, and institutions to see whether they can be substantiated, with regards to reducing the excess time and wastage (I have a good set to start with, if they lack ideas).

Secondly, where it is shown that institutional work (demonstrated, etc.) does not complete the time, then a more adequate compensatory grant should be allowed for the research; that the student is made aware of this at the onset; and if such work increases the wastage rate that it then be supported in such a way that the student rates return to the average.

Thirdly, that a clarification of the purpose, in detail, of higher degree research programmes be made.

Finally, that a guide to research practice be produced to assist both new researchers and their supervisors, which will incorporate the substantiated theories predicting the factors influencing excess time and wastage.

As in all policy matters, sound evidence is more likely if it is preceded by research.

Yours faithfully,
IAN CLEMENTS,
Flat J.K. The Hawthorns,
Keele, Staffs.

Sir—I should not be thought that the complaints of John Riddridge and John Wakeford against the SSRC represent the unanimous view of the BSA membership. Indeed, in our opinion what we are witnessing is a serious and constructive attempt by SSRC to revise their position.

As long ago as 1946 the Clapham committee recognized the danger of an over-expansion of the social sciences drawing able researchers into teaching and administration before they could consolidate their early experience. This is precisely what happened in the 1960s, 1970s with the result that SSRC became dominated by the interests

of university teachers, with its funding being mainly directed into small-scale and subordinate research activities. Postgraduate studentships, in turn, came to reflect the predominance of theoretical teaching at an undergraduate level, the inevitable consequence of the limited research experience of the teachers.

The SSRC is therefore right to recognize that its prime objective is to act as a research council. This necessarily involves some detachment from the interests of teaching, particularly given the archaic tenets of those, the training of postgraduate students, has already received much publicity. Taken as a whole, university departments have done less well in research training than in the production of university teachers, a commodity which is no longer in such demand. Thus, while the Hilsley plan has its defects, it is surely more realistic than anything else on offer.

The second point which is of equal importance but has received rather less public attention, concerns the future structure and funding of research. Good empirical research requires a nurturing environment and up till now SSRC has not, perhaps, shown quite the same skill at creating and sustaining the appropriate kinds of organization as have the more senior research councils. It is therefore about time for the BSA to protest as loudly as just the moment when the SSRC is showing signs of serious thought upon the matter.

We would not claim that Posner and his council have got all the right answers. However, their proposals are sufficiently constructive to merit something rather more than an unmitigated reflex opposition of the BSA leadership.

Yours faithfully,
P. M. STRONG,
Department of social and community medicine,
DR J. M. ATKINSON,
DR R. DINGWALL,
Centre for social studies,
Wolfson College,
Oxford.

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The UGC past and present

The University Grants Committee is much admired by foreigners as a splendid example of the British system for combining efficient administration with respect for independence, academic, artistic, professional.

But what is perhaps most remarkable is that the UGC has survived the often chaotic conditions of the mid-1970s (and of 1979 onwards) in such good shape. The system of university funding which the committee embodies suffered many shocks, the collapse of the old quinquennial, inflation of more than 20 per cent, cuts in public support for universities that reversed the comfortable Robbins ascent, salary restraint among university academics, competition from the maintained sector of higher education. Any one of these might have been regarded as fatal.

Yet the UGC survived all these shocks with its broad functions still in good repair. Its exclusive right to distribute the grant to individual universities has not been challenged. Its role as a guardian of the standards of national priorities in higher education, by individual universities who feared they were not receiving a square deal, or by trade unions which suspected that the block grant system muddled the clear waters of collective bargaining, its second, and weaker, role as the adviser to Government on the overall needs of the university system has perhaps been gradually eroded—but if the amount of next year's grant is a fair indication not perhaps as much as some vice-chancellors have feared.

The committee, of course, has had critics. There have always been

some, although their number has dwindled over the years, who believed that the existence of the UGC is a guarantee of the conservative character of the universities. They argued that the 1919 "settlement" of the status of universities which has proved so long-lasting was a conservative one in the sense that it embodied the ascendancy of the purely academic interest over competing interests (local authorities, or industry). These critics argue that if the funding of universities had been left to depend on a less stable mixture of Treasury grant, local authority contributions, and industrial subsidy, the shape of the system today might be very different. It is easy to feel sympathy for this criticism but impossible to regard it as the basis of practical policy in the circumstances of 1980.

The second criticism is more up-to-date. It is that the UGC is becoming an instrument of Government rather than a protector of the universities. This criticism overlooks the important fact that the UGC has always been an arm—although detached—of Government. It is not simply meant to be a lobby for the universities' "special interest". In any case the article by Mr Owen (page 10) shows that there is little evidence to support this rather paranoid interpretation of the development of the UGC in the past 20 years.

Of course, the UGC has had to become more intimately involved with the processes of Government. With the growth of PESC in the late 1960s and of cash limits in the 1970s the UGC had to become more involved if it wanted to remain effective. It may also be true that